

MORNING MOODS

And Other Poems

By

LORNA GREENE



FOWLER WRIGHT

ST. GEORGE'S HALL, LITTLE RUSSELL STREET, W.C.1.



7976

For

D. Soyatsopek Murisk
with pleasant recollections -

Anna Bronckhage

London

February, 1931.

MORNING MOODS

And Other Poems



Jona Greene

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With an Introduction by

ANNE BOSWORTH GREENE



LONDON :

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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK
TO
THE MEMORY OF
MARY PAULDING MEADE
WHOSE SOUL HELD THE WISDOM AND
GAIETY OF ALL THE WORLD, AND
WHO WAS NOT TOO PROUD TO
SHARE IT WITH A MERE
MORTAL

(Dedication found among L. G.'s papers)

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In Memoriam

LORNA GREENE

(October, 1903—September, 1927)

(From the University College Magazine, December, 1927)

I remember the last day I saw Lorna, as we climbed into the car in Gower Street, she turned to look back affectionately at the College, and said, "I'm sorry to go."

Lorna Greene was killed in a motoring accident—two months ago. She was twenty-three, and a poet. I shall not speak of her early life—passed in America—nor even of her first years at College, but only what I knew of her. She came up in 1923, as a student of History and Egyptology, and continued at intervals till this summer. I knew her only this last year, though I had noticed her in the Refec. and the Cloisters many a time. One could not overlook her arresting figure in the mannish tweed suit and soft collar, nor the detached air of nonchalance with which she moved, an air that I later learnt concealed a real shyness of people. I first met her through the Critical Society, about the only student activity in which she took an active interest, excepting perhaps the Egyptian Circle and the Mag. Even there her attitude was mainly that of a listener, leaning carelessly back in her chair, knees crossed, occasionally interjecting a slow remark through puffs of cigarette-smoke.

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She was incomparably at her best either alone or with one other friend, over tea in the friendliness of the Upper Refec., sitting for hours on the steps, strolling up and down the Cloisters. Nobody would have considered her pretty. Many found her distinguished. I know that we who loved her thought her beautiful. It was a joy to watch the lines of her face, clear-cut and brown as a boy's, a beauty not of skin but bone-deep; a joy enhancing her wit and brilliant delight in conversation—she would break off to nod appreciatively at a good saying—exchange a glance—no more—to show that the excellence of a phrase had got home. Although she took herself seriously, she could stop to laugh at it all, to shrug her shoulders, she could take an objective view of her own introspection. It made conversation shine with her. And her loves were many and various. She loved farming and riding—she always spent the summer vac. on their farm in Vermont. I shall never forget the word 'Ascutney,' because Lorna once described the hill rising before their home—and yet she had a love for London that I used to think could only belong to a born Londoner—a familiar delight in its grey fogs and rain-wet streets and gleaming lights. In my last letter from her she said, "Give my love to London"—it was a living thing to her.

Perhaps all her delights : music, to which she was passionately attached; faces; gardens; poetry most of all—were rooted in her love of Beauty, a love that regulated the whole conduct of her life. She took the craft of poetry seriously—working slowly, not so much in moments of inspiration, as in years, toward perfection. I remember her remarking to me once that it would be impossible to tell if she were any good at it till she was thirty-five at least . . . the beginning must be craftsmanship.

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She is dead. I have written this to her memory, how inadequately everyone who knew her will realize. She would have smiled herself and criticized it: "Not your best work," or, "I see what you're trying to say." But I'm trying to say something that can only be said by an artist—joy that we had her, sorrow that we lost her.

B. G.

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"She was twenty-three, and a poet."

It seems needless to add much to that, except that she was always a poet, always thrilled by the arts, always co-operating with them, from the days when, in a scarlet sweater and white kilted skirt, she walked proudly in the summer-time street of Hyannisport, proclaiming to her nurse and a friend: "*My mamma, goin' to have ekkibitty—in C'ubhouse!*"

She was just three; and I did a poster of her in the sweater and the skirt, doing a work of art before a very large easel, with a very long brush and a most absorbed expression—the look she had, through life, when working at anything.

Later on we built a small studio-house at Provincetown. It was far at the west end, on a bump of dune with wild roses on it; and we loved it. We loved our terrace. It seemed to induce meditations: you saw so much from it—creek and marsh and harbour, Wood End Light opposite, schooners coming and going. There were incredibly beautiful sunsets from Ocean Beach—a lovely region, then unspoiled. The sea-lavender bloomed a foot or less under the clear water, almost brushing our boat as we floated about the marsh at high tide; and it was here that Lorna's life in beauty consciously began. Often I would see her on the top of a dune, lying flat on her pony's back looking up at the sky; or staring at the sea as she followed paths over the bushy dunes, while the pony nipped bites as he went along.

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There was a great deal to do here, and yet somehow it was a meditative life. My child was full of gleeful activities, took all the care of her pony, and did an immense amount with the boats; yet sometimes she would be silent, glancing about quietly with her dark eyes, and then she would speak her meditations. We talked a great deal, even then, about colours and shadows and the entrancing curves of the creek; always with such pleased interest on the small face beside me, such instant understanding. I was spoiled by such a companion. Her interest was like wine to me; as beautifying to everything I tried to do as sunrise-light thrown upon landscape.

But with her a vitalizing imagination seemed to point to a career of letters. I cannot remember the time when it was not taken for granted, between us, that some day she would write. Imagination takes many forms: when she was four years old, it appeared in the guise of one 'Mitter Bwown.'

"I'm Mitter Bwown," she would begin, seated before the fire in her small chair, with an ankle, clasped in two brown fists, crossed upon her knee, eyes simple and serious. "I'm Mitter Bwown, an' I've come f'm Pwvidence to gold the State House Dome . . . Needs it. Dome gettin' all dim. Mitter Bwown . . ." and so to our amazement the tale, of mixed imagination and practical ability, went on; and we listened, fascinated not only by the beauty of the little orator in the fire-light, but by the extraordinary poise, the humour, the dramatic unconsciousness, and above all by the largeness of view-point, always so characteristic of her.

This whole-souledness made her a perfect audience to read to; her eyes devoured one's face. They sometimes devoured the face of a visitor, too, in the same way, so that I had more than

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once to explain that it was grand to be interested, but *not* to stare. It was hard to remember; but I was touched to find she thought about it, for one evening on the terrace she suddenly broke a rather long silence, and this was delivered :

“ Doggie sat in bow of boat;
Captain telled him to stare.
Doggie said, ‘ How you say vat—
W’en I know po-wite-te-ness?’ ”

Pronunciation of the last word quite completed the rhythm; one might call it her first *vers libre*. Five years old; and her perplexities had taken this dramatized form. At the time I said nothing, being somewhat stunned; put an arm round her; smiled; went in after a while and hastily wrote the lines down. She had probably had them in her mind for some time; just as, when she grew up, she would disappear into her study and come out a few minutes later with a poem that would seem to have deserved thought. I would say, “ Rather swift, aren’t you, darling?” And she would murmur placidly, “ Oh—I’ve been thinking about it for three months.”

The most outstanding thing she ever said at that age came quite without preface. We had driven to the ‘ back street ’ for some strawberries, and on the way home she remarked absently :

“ My soul wooked at a strawberry.
It said: ‘ I should wike to eat you,
But I have no mouf!’ ”

I didn’t even know the child knew she had a soul: I had never talked to her about souls; yet here, presaging her keen,

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psychic perceptions of later years, was soul, beginning to play its conscious part. Even to me, who have no imagination, penetrated the fact that my child had a rare one; and it was then that I said to myself, amazed and humble, "I think—I've got something here."

At seven and eight years, she loved to go with me on sketching-trips; we would drive as far as we could go in the wood roads and tie Cupid to a pine-tree, while I hurried off to my dunes.

One day I was gone longer than I intended and came hastily back. "Weren't you bored, darling?" I asked. "No!" said she cheerfully, though still with a little of the dreaming air of one who has been in other spheres. "I talked to ve bog; I talked to a pine-tree; I held up a cranberry—like *vis!*—and talked to it."

Could that be a rhythmic arrangement? I think so. I know that I preserved it all the way home, and a thousand times since have thought of it with pleasure. Partly scenic pleasure, for I too loved bogs and pine-trees and shiny yellow summer cranberries; partly delight in my child's love of beauty, and in that transforming fancy of hers; partly a touched realization of her young patience and chivalry. She would have talked all day to a cranberry rather than rob me of a minute's working-light. How joyful she was because my dunes were coming out well! What a gay and bracing drive we had home with Cupid shying at everything and ourselves laughing so I could hardly hold her!

One day when the picture was being finished, she took a small drum with her to the woods. It was her latest joy. Hating loud noises, she still loved to do little differing things with the drum-sticks in some quiet place, and listen to them; and when I came dragging back that last day, I had the reviving sight of a little figure leaning against a pine-trunk, tapping softly,

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now and then, on her drum. She did not hear me coming; and the beauty of that listening face I shall never forget. Next morning I did a memory sketch of her; very bad, with no model; but it has a little the feeling of that moment. For this was the child that grew up loving Bach and Brahms and Beethoven better than any other joy ("except," as she once burst out to me, "snow-mountains!"), and whose verses on music, with their extraordinary maturity of perception, have power and vision and value.

Then our dear Provincetown grew crowded and impossible, and the farm in Vermont was our resource. For the next six years we stayed on it winter and summer—years of joy and toil, of infinite riding, infinite reading, snow-drifts and adventures, summer riding-trips into the Green Mountains and the Adirondacks. Then came four winters of school in Cambridge—an unusual school, under Mary E. Haskell, who became my child's real and devoted friend, and to whom the poem *The School Principal* was later written; expanding years, with Lorna's ambitions now extending definitely toward books. Before this she had meant to do pony-farming as well as writing; but from now on the farm, though dearer than any other spot, was to be more an accompaniment to work than the object of it; a place of beauty and solace.

During these years poetry, naturally, had been in abeyance. One must grow! And she did: tall, potent, long-striding; taking out her love for poetry by collecting all possible anthologies and reading other people's verse, especially Amy Lowell's, of which she was a devoted admirer. It had been unconscious poetry during the first years of her life; and now for a time the rhythmic imaginings of her childhood gave way to pictorial prose.

Just talk: phrase and description, fresh and forceful and

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graphic; humorous recountings that were to me the stimulus and thrill of those happy days. But the poetic impulse was waiting. A foal shows what it is going to be much more in its first summer than during the next years of growth; wait till it is a three-year-old and there, blossoming before you, is the picture that was promised. The force, sincerity, and originality of her prose essays, also their original titles—*The Turnip*, *The Personality of Saddles*, *The Individualities of Wood*, etc.—had attracted attention at school, where, from being an unknown pupil from the country, she had come in her quiet, humorous, and care-free way first to be a leader in her class and later the sole, and very responsible, manager of the school Dramatic Club. But as soon as school-days ended and adolescence was over, she felt a brief mental freedom, and verses began to be written. Material had been storing up through all these years. In her diary of May 5, 1922, a month before graduation, she says :

I cannot forget that symphony I heard Friday. It was by Rimsky-Korsakov. A wonderful Eastern thing. The fire and passion of the East seethed in it. (At least it seems as if the East must have fire, etc.; all its music and poetry has it) In one movement of the symphony there was a perfect picture of heat; shimmering water, gently-swaying palm-trees, glistening white balcony under the glory of a yellow moon, the faint sounds of the East, and a misty lapping of tiny waves on the shore. And the Prince, in gleaming pearls and floating robes, paying court to the Princess. It makes me want to go there and see it at sunset, sunrise, and moonlight. Not otherwise.

And that impression, repeated at a concert in London, was to re-appear in the poem *A Concert and Afterward*, published two years later in London. But thoughts kept on brewing. Again, on May 21, a very hot Sunday in Boston, she says :

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We have successfully stewed all day, but my brain has been most active, We have sat in the Garden a lot. Saw such an attractive boat-load of children. One, in a blue frock, loafing in the bow; one might call her 'Languor'. Another in a pink frock, rowing, 'Energy', and a boy rolling in the stern, 'Selfishness'. Some day I hope to write a poem about the same. Heat seems to stimulate one's thoughts in a lazy sort of way. If I had had more energy, I might have written something not too bad.

Of graduation she wrote :

It was one of the great experiences. Mary E. gave me, first, my diploma, and then the others. It was really a frightful moment. I think I was rattled, though I am not sure. Sensation passed too fast in my mind to leave enough to analyze later. . . . Mary E.'s manner was a tremendous compliment

Now I am trying to behave as if I were mature, though it feels absurd to think of myself that way. Life needs to knock me a good deal before that state, pleasant or unpleasant (it all depends on one thing, love) hits me. If I am able to escape the 'eternal youth,' I say I shall be all right I do not think I am the kind to live in Needham and cook *soufflé*. J—— has that divine ability; she is not an artist It may be pleasant to be one, but I gather it is more peaceful for your neighbours if you are not. But I would not give up my high heritage or duty for anything in the world except Mother. I think she will shield me from young love. She makes my point of view rational and interested in real mental life, not holding hands on the river. I prefer books at this stage at least. I trust I shall never descend. But for all my loftiness I am narrow enough to want to see only people of intellectual ambition

At eighteen, here was her creed of life about work and books; which did not alter, except to grow more intense.

The first verses she actually wrote were composed just after

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graduation. Because they were the first, and because of an ironic vigour and freshness which they, like all her work, seem to have, I quote them here :

CHARMS OF CANOEING ON THE BASIN

The moon was lovely,
But all the idiots were out howling.
The canoe glided under a dusky bridge
And the rattling subway made me hop.
Venus shimmered in a dark-blue sky,
While a radiant smell of rolls came across the water,
And Tech, beautiful as the Taj Mahal against the moonlit heavens,
Was right next to Carter's Ink!

It *was* a beautiful full moon that night, and I was absurdly pleased with the verses.

On the farm more verses came. A bad attack of muscular eye-strain put off her college ambitions for that year; but she could write in long-hand without strain, and so took correspondence-courses to make up. A two-months trip to Florida varied the winter; also a visit to Washington, during which, at the house of a friend, the two whimsical poems *C'est Moi* and *Washington* were written. An astute description of that variegated city and its atmospheres, for a girl of nineteen; but that was the sort of travelling-companion she was. One needed nothing else.

Eyes, after the holiday, were not much better, as we had hoped; but the impulse to poetry was stronger. There was time, now. And the world around us was beautiful. Spring came, and summer; verses and more verses. Also a marvellous idea. Her eyes were not yet strong enough for book-work; and college, for

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another long year, would be impossible. That must not be! And in England—kind, thoughtful England—we were told that one could attend London University as a ‘ listener ’; go to lectures, take notes (which she could now do), with book-work optional. Hallelujah! I would read books to her in the evenings. And London, incidentally, a rich place to spend the winter in.

That summer was an exultant one. No-one would have suspected—as had been the case since she was nine—that Lorna had headaches every day; although they were beginning to justify the specialist’s prophecies as to being ‘ constitutional ’, and improve a little. She almost never mentioned them; and then with an ironic gaiety. “ Shouldn’t know what to do without ’em, now ! ” she would gallantly assure me.

The farm was lovely that summer. When we started a flower-garden, I proposed getting a man to help, but Lorna would not hear of it. She herself wanted, it seemed, to ride up the knoll every night and get the cow; and again, work-hunger was behind the wish.

“ I get more ideas on that knoll than anywhere else. It’s so beautiful. I’d miss it terribly ! ”

So she had her way; and the beauty she sought was there.

July 25.—Went up the knoll at about 7.30 for Cressy, and saw a most amazing cloud-formation. Heaps of purple-grey in the west, with pink tops from the sun behind. The hills were misty in the north, Ascutney partly shrouded but looking very big and splendid, and above all a nearly full moon sliding into purple clouds. Such colour never was.

Some twenty poems, mostly short, were done during 1922 and the summer of 1923. Struggle was in many of them, and a reflexion, here and there, of pain gallantly borne; a growing sense

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that material things were an impertinence; feelings, cravings scarcely understood, but all the more poignant for that.

"What unnecessary passions, 'preludes of pain', one does go through," she wrote. "When you're in one you think you will never get out . . . though I am learning to consult my stomach and hope for the future! And then afterwards you look back and wonder how you ever were so blue." Many of the difficulties are swift moods that pass; but the high-strung sensitiveness remains. It must, or there would be no poetry. Flight *must* be high-strung: who ever saw a lackadaisical bird? "It all comes of being too intense," she said. "If I could only let up on the bits a little—but of course that is what I never do."

The verses are *vers libre*. Almost since childhood Lorna had had an impatience with rhyme; poets never said what they meant to, she insisted, when tied down to a silly observance of the tails of their lines. Verse, because (except music) it flew the highest, should be the freest of all art-vehicles; poetic form lies not so much in rhyme but in involuted phrasing, in diction, and above all in rhythm, which lifts it close to music's unimaginable sphere. Rhythm was Lorna's—god, I was going to say; love would be more accurate. It shone from her talk; one can see it later on in the prose of her letters. And the rhythm in the verses, always carefully considered, and brooded over with solicitude and love, is conspicuous for its flow and grace; some of the shorter poems seem to have almost visible shape, as if moulded, like a Cretan vase, beneath the hand. I rarely suggested any change in the verses, but once, when I did, I remember being met, quite hotly, with "But don't you see—it spoils the *rhythm*?" She was quite right. And in editing the poems now, in a few cases where alternative words or phrases were indicated in the

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original, my great care has been to use the one the author would have chosen, and for the same reason: its rhythmical value.

"So untainted by modern poetry!" some one has said of her work. It is. She did not by any means enjoy all free verse, or free verse just because it was free verse. She had great independence of judgment, and at twenty was a fearless and penetrating critic. I quote her own energetic words of the moment, written in December, 1923:

Vers libre is the best medium for description, narration, and flitting glimpses into the heart of things, that we have And when a writer confines himself to those three things, and makes his verse vivid and understandable, I like it; but when he wanders off to absurdity and tries to express what he doesn't clearly think, it becomes quite intolerable Modern American verse (most of it) is at present flapping around in an uncertain area, wondering whether it will turn back with pictorial art to forms of other centuries, or fly forward to the extreme, free verse—which is really going back more centuries than the rhymists dream of. But the free-versists do not think or study back as far as Greek times A great deal of free verse I frankly can make nothing of. It seems to swing round some hidden thought, some carefully-guarded germ, and though this may pique one's interest or rouse one to fury, it still remains sunk in depths of moonlit or misty phrase. Some of our greater free-versists do achieve wonderful, picture-giving lines, but it is only the great Though I do not think that Amy Lowell will ever be more than an immortal of phrase She frankly aims for one's lighter self, and gets it always She can be signally ugly sometimes . . . but often in her poems I find sheer beauty that is beyond any in rhymed verse.

Such light and foamy silks, like crinkled cream,
And indigo more blue than sun-whipped seas.

There is her colour-description at its best . . . for sometimes she seems to crush with brutal force a welter of words, all great in themselves, until one is dazzled by the brilliancy.

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For Lorna at this time felt that the work of the free-versists lacked depth,

so that I must perforce content myself with fragments of life in what I read One has to realize that the Imagists do not go more than colour-deep In fact to me that is where this form fails. No-one seems to think it is fit for anything more than incident and effect. I have found to my vexation that heavier motives do not work out well in it.

But she was to change this opinion later, as her searches into ancient literatures widened, and to find in them, notably in Chaldean poetry, *vers libre* of a strength that was to be an inspiration to her in developing her own.

Of the rhymed poets [she says] there are about eleven whom I really like and read all the time There are about a hundred of them who appear in the usual anthology Edna St Vincent Millay's *Renascence* is solemn and fundamental, but in most of her other poems she goes back with an obvious click of joy to the fantastic. *Renascence*, in spots, seems to have been written by a child with the eye of ninety. She was in another mood when she wrote *Wild Swans* . . . but still seems to be a child, sometimes poking a finger into its mouth and pouting.

Lorna never did, never could like Robert Frost.

He seems to have made a great name for himself [she writes with her usual directness]. I am sure I can't see why. I think his things are stodgy and stupid and utterly graceless. His volume *North of Boston* made great talk; but the poems in it seem clumsy to me. He is patty-tatty and horribly New England—that is, the old-fashioned New England that eats cereal and griddle-cakes every morning for breakfast (how can anyone have any imagination who does that?) and hates anything new. He has a poem called *Mending Wall*, . . . and the whole poem is as unimaginative as the name.

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. . . The work of hunters is another thing.
I have come after them and made repair,
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding
To please the yelping dog.

And so he goes on for two pages.

Carl Sandburg, for the most part, she delighted in. "He embodies the thing that America is famous for—the rise of genius from the dust-heaps I like some of his verses, others I can't abide. *Cool Tombs* is one of the latter On the other hand, *Smoke and Steel* has delicate finish and sheer imaginative beauty. Every time I read it I am more and more fascinated. That I happen to feel all he says very strongly, may heighten its appeal to me, of course." She regrets, about Max Eastman, that "a person blessed with his sense of beauty should have it dammed by the boiling fever of revolt," and notes of Witter Bynner that "he is praiseworthy and artistic, but he has never thrilled me I find Witter Bynner hard to put a finger on. He is too much like everybody else who isn't famous."

She was much interested in Stephen Crane, partly because "he started up in a way the methods of free verse of to-day. He isn't at all famous and I suppose I shouldn't be interested. His poem *I Saw a Man* has not exactly beauty . . . but I like it. Perhaps because it doesn't even pretend to be beautiful.

I saw a man pursuing the horizon;
Round and round they sped.
I was disturbed at this;
I accosted the man.
'It is futile,' I said,

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' You can never—'
' You lie,' he cried,
And ran on.

Now that poem has reach, imagination; a sort of bitter and immortal courage. No wonder, though scarcely knowing why, she felt an instinctive kinship with it. It was her kind of thing; and two or three years more of almost startling growth were to see her producing *vers libre* of similar largeness and power.

The early poems are often landscapes—aspects, moments, of the hills she loved; the sky, cloud-shadows, a bird singing; two or three, written from her affectionate and deeply loyal heart, are to friends. *Unbeknown* is a memory of perceptive kindness shown her during that *Lone Winter* when she in town was feeling the solitude as much as I on my hill; we had always been together, and the steady lack was fearful. And *My Universe*, which has been used as a first poem in this volume, seemed so dedicatory, so as if she might like to have it there, that, though I do not know her wish about it, I have put it where it is. In parts it is, lyrically, very lovely; in others it sags a little, is perhaps a trifle heavy in the hand; but it is as she wrote it, with that young devotion which has been at once the miracle and the achievement of my whole life; and so, preluding the others, it seemed almost of its own weight and quality to take its place there.

Splendours that Faded is a beautiful and true bit of early-spring description—of light on "soft-topped woods"—with at the end the little pull that practicalities were beginning to give. "Busy day, but I missed mental labour awfully," she wrote in her diary of January, 1923, when we had been having a concentrated time with snow and ponies. But dish-washing, the household bugaboo referred to in the verses, did not last long. I was not allowed

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to touch it, but thirteen or perhaps seventeen minutes once a day was what it was reduced to under my child's gift for practical accomplishment, her absolute genius for never wasting a motion; and triumphant was the face that, while the carpenter's apron was being hung on its nail, would poke through the door and announce, "Done, by gum! Fourteen minutes to-day. And I wiped the tables and everything—*simply* lovely!" Material things had never mattered to her: meals, clothes, social events, all were unimportances; and during the succeeding years a poetic temperamentalness was to grow upon her very fast. As a friend in London said to her, "You are first of all an artist, Lorna"; and yet, as if combining the impossible, a stoic quality was also highly developed in her. The murmurs were material for poetry; a sort of obstinate cheerfulness, an undaunted humour, she had for everyday life; and no more bracing companion ever lived.

The verses *To the Early-Blooming Bloodroot* had a narrow escape; written inconspicuously in long-hand, they were tucked in among other papers, and I found them only by accident. Somewhere there is another poem, *The Ripe Blackberry*, which I cannot find at all. It is in the partial list of titles she made a year or two ago; it is naïve and simple and original, and was redolent of hot hillsides on a September day. I am grieved not to find it. But I may yet.

Misty Temptation is one of the special ones, rhythmic, rounded, unalterable; a great test of art, when you cannot conceive of its being other than it is. This might be the cry of youth everywhere:

I am torn by a thousand moods,
And the sun shines red
Over the smoky hills.

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How much nobler are a few lines of verse like that than pages of discursive prose. I am growing rather tired of prose. We need beauty badly; and poets are the holders of it. "That line of Keats's, 'The poetry above is never dead'," wrote my child, "holds out a great deal of hope and inspiration to me. For sometimes I become submerged below the seeing of those things into the tangled, ugly mass of the streets, the barren wall of routine work, or even the technical faults of music . . . and yet how easy it is to keep oneself up to the level of seeing that poetry, by the expenditure of mental effort." By her own power of will, then, the poetry above was with her; enabling her in the midst of struggle and perplexity to write a thing like *Misty Temptation*, sensitive, lovely in swing and rhythm, coloured as if by the very sky she was looking at, and yet sane and poised, as she ever was.

The little poem *My Silver Meadow* does not sound like her, but slightly artificial, as if she were temporarily trying the style of someone else; and she never did anything else in the remotest degree resembling that flavour.

A Mood, on the other hand, is very characteristic, showing how tremendously she took other people's difficulties to heart and how vivid was the urge to help. "The world," she wrote at this time, "seems hedged in by one's friends' troubles. The tragedy of — and —, just given to us when — came to dinner last night . . . and meantime one sits powerless, can only help with an occasional meal, a look, a laugh, an understanding smile, and the assurance gained by one's own happiness and security."

In arranging these earlier poems, it has been difficult to determine, in a few instances, whether to do it from the point of view of recognition of a mind and heart which, in her, were great

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and noble; or purely from that of art, which, as she developed beyond the moral, almost missionary period through which all great-hearted youth passes, was ever uppermost in her thoughts—that art of which Swinburne writes, “Hand-maid of religion, exponent of duty, servant of fact, pioneer of morality, she cannot in any way become; she would be none of these things though you were to bray her in a mortar.”

“Art for art’s sake” had always been Lorna’s creed, and soon became, unconsciously, the very fabric of her mind; so my problem in making this “light slight touch of mere arrangement”, has been whether to take out from one or two of the poems an occasional stanza of moralizing, or leave it because it was her thought at the moment, and a noble one. *A Mood* closed with these additional lines :

I felt the power of healing,
And words of salvation sped to my mind.
I grieved for those bound
By cords of glistening convention—
I gave thanks for life. . . .

lines which in a way complete the poem, rounding out the ‘mood’; but I have yielded to those ultra-modern among friendly critics who insist that the young poet herself would have been the first to delete them. I am not so sure. I have wavered many times. Lorna was never averse from the recognition of moral issues. Though in most ways ultra-modern herself, gay, scoffing, ironic, with almost a code of wit for wit’s sake, she was at one and yet at war with her generation. That was why she was, and would have been, great; she had within her, never to be laughed or witticised away, a quality that has gone

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through the ages—the need, and the power, to think deeply on thought-challenging things. Even Swinburne, with his almost pathological art-complex, allows that there are “Men of immense capacity and energy who do seem to . . . assert it possible to serve both masters—a Dante, a Shelley, a Hugo—poets whose work is mixed with and coloured by personal action or suffering for some cause moral or political . . .” And Lorna’s nature was rich enough for both. Her energy, her all-round capacity and strength of purpose, joined to those powers of psychic perception and dramatic imagination so inherent in her, might well have brought her poetry to the highest levels both of artistry and of humanitarianism. As in her late poem “Failure,” this great-hearted look at the “suffering of the world and workers” appears, and “hot thoughts of all the ages” pervade but do not eclipse the art of the poem; so in her earlier work thoughts of art invade yet do not quite possess, or blur, her moral strivings.

But her worries about herself as a rule were delightfully whimsical.

“I think sometimes I shall never be a poet,” she would complain to me, “because I’m not immoral. You really *should* be, you know!”

And our eyes would meet in extinguishing laughter. Manuscripts came back, as young poets’ manuscripts do; and then her developed gallantry and sense of fun, also a rather remarkable philosophy which the vicissitudes of farm life had not diminished, came to the rescue.

“Another of ’em!” she would say, opening a long envelop as we rode away from the mail; and if I, feeling rather speechless at such moments, reached over and patted her arm, she would add, looking affectionately across at me, “Oh—I don’t mind,

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belovedest! I expect 'em, you know."

Two editors—the editor of "The Seven Arts" in Chicago and the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*—were specially courteous to her, the latter sending her a very kind personal note of some length; an unusual tribute which gave her the greatest encouragement. "It's coming, darling," I told her. "All you have to do is keep on working."

And she did. That autumn, though with many pangs at leaving the farm, we sailed for England; and her feeling took shape in the little poem *My Grey House*—beautiful in its simplicity; beautiful with a something unnameable that her poetry seems to have. I can just see the little house as, torn at heart, we go down the hill looking back at it; how

It sits on its hill,
And the pink flowers flutter
Over its old grey sides.

But the world was before her. A first Atlantic voyage; down the St Lawrence, out by Belle Isle, its lighthouse and heathery cliffs lovely in the sunset, a great iceberg heaving slightly on dark-blue seas; then the north shore of Ireland, faint emerald in the early sun, the Irish sea choppy but delightful; at last, pale towers mounting into tumultuous clouds—Liverpool, tea and sponge-cake at a Lyons; also our first English rain, very sooty. A felicitous introduction into England, which from the very first, rain and all, Lorna loved. I had told her stories of my childhood there; and London, kind, soft-rumbling London, did the rest.

We were on Cheyne Walk that first winter; the river fascinated us as it had Turner—whose house was a few doors away—and *Music and Water* was written there. A composer had a studio

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below us, and it was his playing of Chopin, as the tide rushed in, that inspired the poem.

Her papers written during that first year at London University deal chiefly, as one might expect, with poetry. But, besides literary courses, all the history lectures obtainable were crowded into that first, eager winter: Greece and Rome, Egypt and Babylonia and the Hittites; also we discovered a mine of interest in the School of Slavonic Studies at Kings, one of the colleges of the university, on the Strand. The poem *The Flight of Igor* came to her mind after some Russian lectures by Prince Svyatopolk Mirsky, whose fragments of translation from that wonderful old epic of a Tartar prince were so enthralling, their images so fresh and vigorous, that Lorna's imagination at once kindled. We both of us walked home down the Embankment, thrilling; and the next day these atmospheric verses, quite breathing the mournful drama of the Russian spirit, were composed.

But of all the arts music, I think, was her greatest love, and Queen's Hall with its pleasant, blue-green colouring and soft orange lights was the scene of happy evenings; evenings of magic, of that inner transfiguration which great music brings. Then there was the walk home, "down the whole length of Regent Street!" as the diary naïvely says; down the steps under the Duke of York on his high shaft, across St James Park—beautiful in duskiness, with copper lights in its pond, and the copper sky of Piccadilly above the thick treetops; along the Birdcage Walk and through Princes Street to Westminster; or during this first winter it would be past Hyde Park Corner, down Sloane Street and King's Road to Chelsea. The poem *A Concert and Afterwards* was suggested by one of these evenings; and its rendering of the work of composers as widely different as Rimsky-Korsakov,

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Mozart, and Stravinsky is both delightful and true. Not so poignant as some of the later poems on music, it has rather the quality of a Chinese wall-painting, a form of art its author admired intensely. I do not think it was meant to be poignant—just a portrayal of colour and form conjured up by music; and before we left London it was sent to the editors of the Year-book of Verse.

Written that autumn, too, was *The Night of a Frost* with its bold and lovely leap into imagination :

The wind blows the world silver,
The moon casts a cloak of coldness;

a memory, after a November week-end in Sussex, of one of our hard silver frosts in Vermont, remorseless, inevitable. "Just those three words 'All that grew,'" said a friend, "make one shiver."

On a Night Train in France is reminiscent of our start for Italy at Easter-time. Again, in the quiet music of the last lines, is that largeness of outlook noticeable in so many of the poems.

The flame droops;
Out there is utter silence—
Around me, light, litter,
And the clatter of Latin speech;
Mine own slow tongue seems alien,
As does my love of that silent world.

So well I remember her that night, with her young head thrust out of our window into the darkness, musing, looking, her eyes dwelling with love on "that silent world"; then coming back, blinking, but with a quick smile of understanding at

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me, into the lighted compartment; which we happened to share, during the whole trip, with a quarrelsome, card-playing, orange-eating, dozing, chattering young French bridal couple.

On our return to London that particularly happy idyll *A Spring Sun Shines on Chelsea* was written. That was what we had, and loved, on Cheyne Walk. I am so glad she wrote it. I do not think any English poet has mentioned it, but there is something magical about the peace of a fair London Sunday, that no one could help loving. It brought our own springtime to mind; and wherever we were, we could never think of that without longing.

The Spring Break-up at Night and *May Chores*, however, were composed later on the farm, during the summer. A glorious summer; but one of so many guests, activities, and riding trips, besides hours of work daily on a prose manuscript, that verses were necessarily few.

"I don't seem to be doing many poems, do I, A. B.?" she would say, with a slightly worried brow. But in August a great joy came to her. She strolled out from the post-office one afternoon, ripping open a letter in her casual way, then looked up—with such eyes. "I'm published!" she said; slid into her saddle, and we trotted swiftly off, the precious letter fluttering from her hand. Then we slowed down on a hill.

"What did I tell you?" I said, full of bliss.

"I can't believe it," said she, happily re-reading the letter. But it was true. The *Poems* printed in Oxford by Basil Blackwell, was a pleasant, parchment-covered volume of some fifty-six titles. My copy opens quite naturally to page 24, and *A Concert and Afterwards* looking interesting and competent on its well-spaced page; and from that day its young author, as the "Mag" has

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said of her, was to be "a well-known and respected figure among all this generation's literary folk in the University."

Though few that year, the poems are of charming quality. The little lyric *May Chores* is one of her happiest, and the *Spring Break-up* has a deep appeal to all lovers of outdoors. We always hurried home if we could for that 'break-up'; we would stand on the porch in the soft evening dark and listen to it. Lorna often said it was more wonderful to her than any other part of the spring; just those sounds, at night.

The slightly enigmatic and rather wild little poem entitled *Riding Home at Dark* calls for brief explanation. It was a frosty September evening, and we had been dining at Miserbrook with Pud and Polly; the lines

Smiles refused by brown eyes,
Frowned on by furry ears,

refer to her habit of saying, "Smile, Pud—*smile!*" to her horse, when, as he did that night, he was looking very ferocious and intent. Usually he did smile, and the quick ears would pop forward; but that night it was cold, Polly was trying to get ahead of him; he wanted to get home, and all my child's blandishments were "frowned on by furry ears." The next lines have the very smell of those delicious evenings, and our delight in them: "dim, dark valleys, the smell of frozen flowers." One must have ridden there in the dark to know the feeling of it.

Our return to England that winter was put off because of the illness of my father, beloved by both of us. October came; we should have been sailing for London—London, that had been so kind to us. Longing seized my child; and the affection, the pathetic patience of *Remembering London* has always wrenched

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my heart. The poem, brief as it is, is a faithful picture of the dear rainy town and its crowded shop windows, seen from the top of a bus. In Vermont there was almost a distractingly fine autumn that year; her diary says :

I thought I had grown beyond these un-understandable wants, when I feel hot and tired and restless and can't analyze myself; London, if she were attainable, might help, but I doubt it. It is fall, with me, that brings on these moods, not spring . . . and this heart-breakingly beautiful, dreamy, ideal September weather either stirs one up into a great ferment, or fills one with beautitude and bliss

Winter came, with beauty and interest in its snowy days, and two poems record it—*Clearing the Watering-trough* and *Five Minutes after Sunrise*; for, though busy with her manuscript and with college reading, she was sharing, with that unfailing gaiety of hers, in all the icy routine of the farm, unusually severe that year; “20 below zero weather,” she cheerfully writes; “glare ice everywhere, slipping ponies, freezing pipes, etc!”

Then from January till mid-April we were in New York; months of strenuous work for both of us, of much joy in music, considerable social diversion, and an absolute orgy of theatre. One comment of hers is significant :

“Jan. 16. Went to ‘The Little Clay Cart,’ a Hindu drama, at the Neighbourhood Playhouse. Very wanky, very amusing, *very inaccurate*.” Here was the historical sense, even now, after one year of university training—but such training—outraged at any suggestion of unscholarly treatment of ancient fact or atmosphere which, to her, mattered so intensely. I well remember her amused wrath at various absurdities, both of text and direction, in the play.

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Aside from all this it was a time of some difficulty and depression for Lorna. She had badly sprained a wrist on the farm and was undergoing a painful cure for that; the prose manuscript, worked on with such ardour, such sacrifice of summer outdoor hours, met with unfeeling treatment by a critic. It was quite my fault. Her letters written to me three years earlier, during our Lone Winter, were so appealing and original that I had begged her to try making a small book of them. They needed a little arranging, and some one else should have done it. She did not know why they were charming; I of course could not explain to her why. There *are* some things, personal cachets and aromas, into which even a literarily avid parent forbears to step; and the letters on the whole rather annoyed her. She was not egoistic enough for the delicate job it was; I think in all her life she never would have been. She took out the naïve details, therefore, and left in the opinions; a result which did not please literary agents. I felt horribly to blame. I had not realized the carving (into the charms of the letters) that her stern young standards would require; and the poem *Self-Disgust* reflects the mental turmoil of this time; the blank feeling so familiar to all writers, and the subsequent stirring of what the poem entertainingly calls "that inner insect"—a sense of duty.

Also she suddenly discovered she was in love; and some verses written during these weeks give youth's noble vision of idyllic love; the vision that a mind like hers would hold.

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You have led me to the edge of the forest of love,
And eyes in eyes,

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Hearts in hearts
We shall move through its mazes,
Fretted perhaps by thorns
And scratched by common things,
But upheld always by the trees themselves.
They shall stand out before us
Like anticipated glances on understanding;

* * *

And the light of our passing
Shall leap into a flame
Which will drive before it
The sordidness of life—
Away into the pages of history;
And every love's flame after
Shall have a fiercer blaze.

Her way of falling in love, even, was characteristic—it had to approach her, like everything else of importance in her life, through the medium of intellect and work; and its course through unrevealed yearning, heart-wrung though stoic acceptance of the object's selfishness and unworthiness, and final, gay emergence into the clear air of recovery and of absorption in her one permanent passion, literary labour, tinged her life and verse for the next year or more.

Music, however, was an enormous resource during this stay in town, though sometimes its technical faults obtruded. "Rather bad concert," she writes after a Damrosch symphony of January 23. "Beethoven programme. The 9th Symphony did not, as it should have done, make my hair stand up on end at all. Whole thing mealy. No change in tempo. Chorus, as a last number, put iron and life into it, and was quite satisfactory." But there was plenty of music beautifully done, and a group of poems written

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at the time show how deep was its impression upon her sensitive feeling. One, beginning :

Rachmaninoff;
Moods, slams, tinkles,
Fed with minor bubbles
When we came for the
Rich and gorgeous—

recalls something she wrote in 1922, three years earlier, in Boston :

“ Mirovitch gave us a very charming concert . . . but he started by playing a number of light things, while I sat and craved the heavier diet.”

Even at eighteen, sugar was not to her taste. But she goes on: “ Mirovitch’s main composition was the Chopin sonata in B flat minor. Rarely I think have I heard such playing. It went to one’s heart like the haze of distant snow-capped peaks, or the murmur of a grove of poplars just coming into new leaf, when a little breeze drifts through them.”

The diary says :

N. Y. has been very absorbing, and when I shake it down a bit I hope to see it has matured me. At present my mind is full of black shadows I have been fool enough to fall in love—violently, of course These Celtic moods—is it any simpler to be purely Anglo-Saxon, I wonder? . . . Poor X—— bit a pillow till all the stuffing came out, when feeling the same. I wish I had lack of humour enough to do that But I am really unbendably interested in a novel anyway; maybe I can smother all this in it Life is rather full just now. The hills help though, for how can anyone be swallowed in black when they are so silently at peace.

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After those noisy and frantically busy months in town, the farm, to both of us, seemed too good to believe. Perplexities somehow magically lessened, and the happy, outdoor verses began again. Of these, *The Numbered Days of Spring* is an endearing one; the music of the poem, combined, at the end, with the little twist of originality, of intellect, which her work never seems to lack, makes a loveable whole. Of course I can see our back valleys—the Doone-valley, and our woods; I know how often she spoke of the lush heaviness of summer and its lack of appeal compared with the delicacy of spring. But the poem is there. I think others beside myself will care for it.

We rode a great deal that summer; reveled in woods and brooks and hills. "Took a simply glorious ride nearly to Plymouth," she wrote. "Dolly and Pud. Marvellous day. Never saw such an array of spring. In between times I am working madly on the novel." Another day, of a spring riding trip: "Arrived, by one, at Chateauguay via top of Daley Hollow and the hills. . . . The hills in their best early spring dress with the tops of the mountains still bare. After a warm-corner lunch we fished the lower part of Il Penseroso valley, result ten. After tea we did the big valley for an hour, result one minnow for A. B. . . . , then we rode on very peppy horses to Pinnacle Pasture. Lovely sunlight, and sunset. Beautiful dinner under the biggest stars. Slept very well both of us."

The novel mentioned above was called *Sonia, Individualist* and was never finished; I find only a fragment of its beginning—which to me seems interesting in tone; psychic.

"I have tried three times to write the story. I thought at first it was of my life, now I think it is Sonia's. Only I have torn it up, and wept, for Sonia is lost to me, and I would like

to have her in some other form than fragile memory. Though she was such an aloof, strangely fancied creature that it is difficult to catch all her personality at one time . . ." One wished the story had gone on.

But for all its joys the summer was not an easy one. "Mean-time I struggle with the shadows," she says. "If I could write my heart, all would be well. But my heart cries after the unattainable . . . and in moments when I should turn my all to production, the world is emotionally a zero."

Four or five significant poems however, were written during these months: *Oriental Poppies*, *Leaves*, *From Pinnacle Pasture*, *Vision*, and others; also we planned about the book of verse that, later, she would get out. But we were very busy getting ready to return to London in September. Pangs of leaving again, mingled with keen anticipations; and a delightful winter followed, in London and out of London. We bought a little Citroën car, our Nicolette, and every week-end there was the sweet misty English country for us, with ivy garnishing the trees and the grass bright green. It did not seem like winter.

We had a small "flat" just round the corner from Westminster Abbey, whence we could walk to theatres or across the park to dinner—for Lorna had by this time been admitted to the same professional club to which I belonged; and great was our joy. A tumult of courses at the university; mental riches piling up; more and more a clear way pointing to ancient things and my child's appropriation of them; her growing love of that primitive world which every day became more real to her, and from which was to come inspiration for her life's work. Here, in these vivifying surroundings, with the very stones speaking of ages past, she found the perfect spot for study. Archæology,

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Egyptology; the Pharaohs; far more real to her than the scarcely considered lads at the university, rushing through the Cloisters or lounging in the "refec"; their psychology far fresher and more certain! Ramses the second, "slender and charming"; that great liberal Akhnaton, "the kingly dreamer," and others. Friends of hers, all of them; though she had her preferences. I used to wish I had preferences in Pharaohs. . . .

And yet she never even approached being a grind. Life was too vivid in her. She had some very lively chums too, witty, brilliant, intensely modern, of scoffing and independent minds; they sat in lectures together, smoked and discussed the world on the steps of the "Quad," joined the Critical Socitey, had their morning coffee together in the refec; and their friendship steadily grew. Just before we started on our Eastern holiday on the Continent, a little note from one of them, very different from the usual levity of their communications, a real *cri du cœur*, scribbled on a page of Lorna's note-book, clings in my mind.

"When are you coming back, Greene? Oh Greene, you are such a support and comfort to me."

A portrait of my child, that little cry might be.

From the writing of *The Numbered Days of Spring*, in May 1925, to our return to America in July, 1926, some fifteen poems were written. Their increasing vision and sureness to touch scarcely need comment. Through struggle and difficulty, through varied pleasures and much deep happiness, she was making her gallant way. She grew, and her work with her. The poem *Leaves* came out in the University College Magazine; others were written later in London, or on our trip through France and Italy.

A Seagull's Freedom was composed one lovely afternoon on her way to a lecture at King's, where, leaning on the wall of the

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Embankment below Westminster Bridge, she had watched the gleaming flight of the gulls. About this time she had written glowingly of her life and her enthusiasm for English education to a friend at home, who, not sharing our delight in England, sent a chilly and scornful letter in reply; and *Beauty Lost* was the reaction to that, its first lines being such a happy expression of her habitual mood while at work :

I scuff through pages
That are lighted vistas of pleasure . . .

For it was a happy picture I had, if I peeped in her door while she was at work : her dark head against the curtain-softened sunlight of her southern windows, with an exquisite water-colour sky—Lorna loved that sky—and the gray-blue towers of London behind her; the beautiful clear profile of her intent brown face bent over some huge volume propped on the table; feet extended to the fire, a cigarette between her brown fingers—even those fingers looked blissful and absorbed; and then the upturning gaze, at first dim and remote, then alive and welcoming, of her sincere dark eyes.

For the spring holidays we jumped Nicolette across the Channel and motored through France and Italy. *Chartres Cathedral* and *The Shadowless Past* were written respectively in Chartres and in Florence. In the cathedral she disappeared for a few moments, while I wandered about, tranced by the wonder of the windows; then she slid out of a dusky seat behind a great pillar and without a word put the verses in my hand. Those who know Chartres will feel it in these lines. Nicolette, in the sunny, cobbled square outside, was waiting for us; but we could hardly bear to leave that shadowy beauty and go.

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At Varenna, on Lake Como, we had news of the death of a dear friend, Mary Paulding Meade, the first grief of the kind Lorna had known; bitter grief for a gay and gallant spirit who in that lonely winter in Boston, as at all other times, had been unfathomably kind and sweet to her. So the lines

Como pondering under her moon,
And I weighted with my pain—

were an outcome of her saddened feeling there. I have found among Lorna's papers a page written evidently a year or two ago, bearing a dedication of a book to that friend's beloved memory; I have used it for the opening page of this volume.

Love and Shattered Lions, written one rainy Sunday in Vicenza, was the old, nearly vanquished yearning cropping up again—almost its last appearance; for in the strength, the exultation of *Rigid Pillars*, one feels the soul had indeed

. . . risen again
As a bird from the earth,
Risen,
To those heights of silver calm
That hide between the rigid
Pillars of unbending passion.

That splendid outpouring, triumphant, yet level-headed and unextravagant, as she ever was, came into being on our voyage home in early July on the "Regina"; a fine ship and a calm trip, but with cold Labrador showing naked branches to us after the bright leafiness of London. Vermont was more cordial. The garden was good to us in spite of our late arrival; Lorna,

fascinated by our journeyings in Italy, was planning an Italian novel of the sixteenth century, "to be done four or five years from now, when I have time to read up the period," she explained; and she had brought home so many of her beloved tomes for study that her own writing was not resumed until the autumn. She found herself tired after the strenuous winter, and I, and every one else, implored her to rest. We never did really rest on the farm; but again we did our best at it—even motored to Cape Cod and basked and swam there; and once more in September the Atlantic gently bored us for the requisite number of days, and there was London again.

The same dear little flat, Nicolette "very fit, and glad to see us," as the diary says; and a stupendous season of work planned at the university. How charming the child looked starting off in the morning, full of ardour and enterprise, loaded with note-books for her day of lectures; in her gray-brown Harris tweed and Liberty tie, her brown face under a felt hat with a tiny feather tucked in it; the yellow chamois gloves that good Ricketts, our cockney charwoman, washed for her with such devotion; the brown oxfords, the slim ankles in gray-brown clocked stockings; such a humorous flash in her dark eyes and a colour in her brown cheek as she turned to throw me a last farewell:

"Bye, belovedest—or I'll be late for Pollard, dash him. Meet you at the club. Be *sure* you eat some lunch! Bye!" and the door would clang to. Sometimes, smiling, I watched her scurrying down the wide flights of stone steps that led to the fern-trimmed hall below; always I lamented the fact that our windows looked out on Great Peter Street instead of on Great Smith Street, where I could have watched her go—swinging hastily into an "88" that passed our door, or striding away with her long unhurried steps

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to the corner of Victoria Street and the Broad Sanctuary, where the Bloomsbury buses ran that would take her within a block of Gower Street and college.

It was a winter of tremendous work. She would not even think of a degree; wishing, as she often told me, to pack her university years with everything that would enrich a literary career, instead of being tied to one subject, she browsed at will, working always with delight, *because she set herself at it*. (To me, that is the first requisite of true education.' How many of our students find their books "lighted vistas of pleasure"? Many of them scarcely read at all. In England a few do; in Europe they do because they must; but even in Italy there is a saying,—

Che è studente?

È quello che non studente niente!

Courses in Social Philosophy and Sociology; and a much-enjoyed course in Italian Literature with Professor Edmund G. Gardner, a perfect person for his subject, with his sympathetic voice and manner, his unworldly sweetness. He seemed just the right one to interpret Dante, and was so in love with things Italian that, chancing to see my child's dark head between others, he stared for a moment fixedly; later telling her with amused apology that he had taken her for an Italian youth; and after *An Atom of Celestial Beauty* was published in the spring, he treated Lorna with a marked and charming deference.

"Edmund's very sweet to me now," she said, quaintly and naïvely, slipping her arm through mine as we crossed the quadrangle together; "he refers reverently to me whenever poetry is mentioned!" I loved to see the happy surety in her eyes.

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Her world was being good to her, doing her honour; best of all, her plans were shaping, the vision of her work growing more definite every day.

"Perhaps you'd like to know that they've put the *Atom* almost on the front page," her chum wrote her when we were away on holiday; and so it was. The literary group were startled by its beauty and maturity. The poems always had made their impression; when *Clearing the Watering-trough* came out the year previous, its author was amused at the fervor of those who assured her that by its publication the literary tone of the Magazine had been immeasurably raised. "They all tell me so," she said, her eyes, brimming with laughter, dwelling on mine.

But I was not so amused. It was the child of the cranberry-bog coming through again, that was all. But it was wonderful to have it happening. In November I was called back to America by my mother's tragic illness. I quote very briefly from Lorna's letters which show the eager life going on; the first beginning with her motoring out from London for a week-end at Beachy Head—the scene of her poem *On a Chalk Cliff*.

I went over Westminster Bridge at exactly 11:30. . . . From that I went on . . . through sun and rain and puddles, via Lewes and Alfriston. It was sickening not to have you there. Damnable. I never have, I think, seen trees more lovely: the cold weather last week has turned them just too gorgeously. . . . I went twelve miles an hour and gasped. From the top of the hill beyond Friston I saw a sunset too, pink flame-colour, with a blue-leaden sky overhead and a grey-violet sea underneath, and the downs clear gold and russet. Nicolette and I stopped and watched it for a long time, even though we did want our tea. Mrs. S—— was very sweet and kind, and properly impressed by my cold. She offered me hot stout to go to bed on, but I thought of my palate and didn't accept. . . . Next morning was simply topping; like the birthday

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Sunday. (Now I asked her what the name of that cove is, we went to, and I can't remember. Dash. I shall write it on the map.) Jude came with me. When I got to the sea it was high tide, and making such a roar against the cliffs, perfectly lovely. And the milky whiteness went out so much farther than we'd ever seen it, and the sea was so blue, and the cliffs were so white and glittering that they made me blink. I walked from there to the lighthouse. Jude was horribly frightened by the civilization of Burling Gap, it took psychology to get her through. . . . And I thought of you and didn't look over the cliff at all, except once to look at the wreck, which was having a very wet time, and then I lay down. Jude has a way of running at the cliff full tilt and then sitting down. If she hadn't been a dog I should have grown six white hairs right off quick.

Nov. 9.

Dearest beloved: A grey, shining morning, with the chimney pots sending up large steaming streams. Colder, I suppose. Yesterday it was properly warm, and I almost, not quite, thought of going without a jumper. (Damn person hanging pictures underneath.) But my cold is still a fairly well-nourished member of society, and I didn't.

I'm feeling very well today and nicely padded with compliments. Last night, on an impulse, I fed with the Ancient Egypt Circle, and then listened to K—— reading a very good paper on the Relations of the Ptolemies with Rome. . . . It's quite fun feeding with the Circle, I never thought it would be. M—— was very sweet. She began chatting to me again about giving a paper. . . . I rather think I'll take Trade and Methods of Carriage. . . . If I began on religion I shouldn't be able to work on anything else from now to then. No, I shall reserve religion for the quietude of next autumn. . . .

Nov. 24.

Darling A. B.: . . . Do you know, whatever there is or not in this occult business, I feel sure of one thing, that I can't be happy when you aren't. It's queer. I miss you in the same quality all the time, but that doesn't seem to affect the happiness business. . . . Yesterday (Sunday) I

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suddenly felt that you were laughing and talking with someone congenial, and were in a large, airy room that soothed you. And that you were being encouraged and soothed by people you love. I was motoring in a downpour over Ashdown Forest at the time and it was 1:30 by Boston time. And I don't think I felt so suddenly soothed just because the sky was all sullen flame with a layer of black on top, and a moon making already a silver path in the sky in preparation for rising. Or later because she came up so soft and silver over a black larch woods, and the world was utterly quiet, except for the ripple of a little brook, and I saw far off the red glow of London. . . .

The Russian Ballet is simply too wonderful to believe. I shall have to take to living on straw and go *all* the time it lasts. Even despite the best efforts of the Roman Empire I haven't been able to think of much else all day. . . . I'm going to read Bertram Russell's "Introduction to Philosophy" and Solase's "Pre-History" this vac, the Lord save me, and the "Comedia Divina." That's a hair-raising combination.

I'm turning to the Ptolemies for a change, so I hope to have an atmospheric breather over the week-end. I find the history of the Roman Empire consists of three themes, suicides, the army, and moral decadence. Topping, so cheering.

Sleep well, my beloved—there is no use trying to say good-bye or what I feel for you or what I feel because you're not here. So that, said John, is that. . . . If you go to the Farm will you fish that out of the chest and bring it here?

Dec. 3.

I had a topping letter from Viola last week. She is really too adorable. Also penetrating: she said I was "big, still chaotic—half-chaotic that you are, incredibly so largely a stranger to yourself." To the latter of which I agreed, feeling at the time especially chaotic and quite an unknown quantity. I wish one didn't change. . . . Viola says, "I need to get closer in time to a fast-transforming creature like yourself to have more than a fond wave of the hand to send so far."

. . . I'm going to devote the rest of this week to the Ptolemies and my bed. To be sure the H's are coming to dine with me tomorrow night. . . . It appears evident that I shall have to do philosophy and

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School of Oriental Studies for a bit, next winter. I'm too intrigued. And I don't feel half grounded enough. I've decided there is no hurry about getting to write. I'm going to be a slow-developing genius, I am! . . .

I returned, desolate, at Christmas-time; but there on the wharf at Plymouth was my loyal child with Nicolette, and again we drove about in Cornwall and Devon for the holidays. Clovelly was kind, its woods and cliffs reviving, as always, the light on its bay a benediction; and in mid-January we drove back to work and London. A paper was to be prepared for the February meeting of the Ancient Egypt Circle; so study for that was added to Lorna's other labours.

But verses would crop out occasionally. *An Atom of Celestial Beauty* had been written while I was away; its reflections having been suggested by a visit to our favourite Chiddingstone and the little ancient church there. "Kent is so lovely, I'd forgotten," she wrote me. "We lunched at Chiddingstone, as I've previously mentioned we should, and the sun shone, and the treetops are already thick with buds, and the birds sang in the hedgerows, and the Sabbath quiet was thick about us. B——— simply adored Chiddingstone. The lake and the manor looked like a very old Chinese print, everything was so grey and blue and still, and the ducks were all asleep on the water at the other end."

Light and Fog, also, had been done while I was away; and one evening in February Lorna met me at the club with more than usually humorous eyes.

"Wrote a poem in a lecture to-day," she said.

"You did! The way you and Betty listen to lectures!" said I derisively; really very much pleased.

"Oh—there wasn't anything to listen to," said she, with happy insolence. "Just mush!"

For two of her courses that winter had turned out rather a dose and *Reaction from the Renaissance* was the poem.

On a Chalk Cliff was found scribbled in a small loose-leaf note-book she always carried with her. The poem had its origin at Beachy Head; that splendid cliff rearing six hundred feet above the Channel, the downs upon it golden in autumn. The cliff is chalk-white, with rows of black flint set in it, and thousands of starlings perching on the flints. I know its "death-cold breath"; also the scattered, surf-beaten thoughts and feelings, mostly feelings, one has in such a place; so the poem, leading nowhere in particular except back to

Thoughts and visions,
And the rumble of the eternal seas—

is strangely satisfying.

The images in *Clusters of Thought* are reminiscent of our return from Italy the year before through the battle-fields of France, in a frightful rain. We did not want to go through the battle-fields, but it was our shortest way; and the impression they left was unforgettable. This poem was chosen for the Centenary number of the Magazine; the Centenary of London University being about to occur, in July.

In the loose-leaf note-book, again, was first inscribed the interesting poem *Failure*, where once more the penetrating psychology and largeness of viewpoint seem incongruous, coming from the mind of one so young. She had taken this year a course in Social Philosophy. "just for enrichment," as she gaily told me, and

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found herself thrilled by it. Social problems had interested her since the days when at twelve years old, on the farm, she was impassionedly reading four-column editorials on Russia; so now surging in her mind were

“ Hot thoughts of all the ages.”

Glorious broadening; glorious (and unusual) preparation—for a poet. Her survey when a child had been almost uncannily wide; now with scholarship added, with the philosophy gained by valiant strife and noble inner struggle, with her appropriating mind and poet's vision, what a field for achievement was opening before her.

That never-resting mind had already traveled far; it had besides an almost merciless way of pouncing on things and shaking the ultimate meanings out of them. Just the mind to deal vivifyingly with ancient things, to illuminate them not only by porings and patient research but by something far more vital, the intuitive perceptions of a lover to whose passionate broodings their inmost mysteries are clear. For it was so, with such hunger and passion, even to every detail of their expression of themselves in poetry, in sculpture, in design and colour, or in the doings of everyday life, that she loved these ancient peoples. Their characters, in her mind, lived and walked; were benignant to the arts, graceful in their loves, fiery-gallant in achievement, desert-weary, often, with heroic battles; and it was of such a one, the young king Ramses the Second, “ slender and charming,” inimitably brave against great odds and real to her as morning sunlight, that she began in May to write those stirring verses entitled *Ramses before the Walls of Kadesh*. Great encouragement had come to her of late, about her chosen work; after the reading of her paper before the

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Ancient Egypt Circle, her repute in college had grown, and even Professor Gardner, who had known her previously only in literary fields, meeting her one day in the Cloisters, warmly congratulated her, adding in his simple-hearted but exquisitely courteous way :

"I didn't know you were such a scholar, Miss Greene." Our friend Sir Henry Newbolt, too, had interested himself in her career and offered his influence, here and there, to obtain a scholar's privileges for her : "If there is anything I can do you will let me know, won't you," was his characteristically kind plea, on ending a long talk with her about the book on Akhnaton she had in mind. . . . So delightful gates were opening. We planned; how we planned ! More months in the School of Oriental Studies, where Sir Denison Ross offered her all possible aid; travels to Persia and Cambodia, to Egypt and India; research perhaps in southern Russia, through which so many peoples migrated and where the field is so rich. Our world, present and future, was filled to the brim; fairly dizzy with interest.

But though busy with term-work, she could wait no longer to plunge in—to some of the actuality she craved; and the verses on Ramses were an experiment.

"Just trying my hand, you know," she gaily explained, laying a sheet of foolscap before me. It was the first page. I read it; with chills, absolutely, creeping in my hair. It seemed to me magnificent. Not only to me; her chum Wilkinson, ordinarily a scornful person, highly *exigeante* mentally, extremely susceptible to boredom and as impatient of it, was similarly affected; and she and I, in private, wagged our heads over the blaze of this beginning :

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A king who stood above the multitude
Of vacillating ones,
Whose right arm was like a jade
Shaft flung into the sunlight . . .

These last two lines occurred to her, as many things did, at a concert of the London Symphony Orchestra. Wilkinson was with us; we all three walked back through St James's Park to the flat, triumphant; and had cocoa and Egyptology, and infinite talk on verse-methods, around the fire. A glowing evening.

So the world was crowded with a thousand things, work being done at the moment, dreams of work for later days; and we were relieved to run away in Nicolette at Easter-time for a fortnight's rest at Bormes-les-Mimosas, then for a drive among the Pyrenees as far as the snows would let us—we almost bumped into Andorra, but drifts deterred us; and back through Brittany. A heavenly trip; but for the first few days, all down through the cold unspeakable gorges of the Cevennes, Lorna was thinking about her poem.

"I can't get those Recruits in," she would confide, driving us very carefully beside a precipice-edge; my child had a habit at such moments of broaching the weightiest topics, while I tried not to hold on to Nicolette's side. "They're *very* important—they came way across the desert and changed everything; but they're not Poetry. I may have to make a prose interlude and bring them in that way"; and she would drive pensively along, attending beautifully to Nicolette's wants, glancing affectionately at gorges and rushing streams, yet as I well knew by the look in her eyes, pondering on her work. We both loved that pondering. One day as we were scudding down the magnificence of the Rhone Valley, with castles on every peak, a fierce wind blowing, Nicolette, no longer hampered by precipices, tearing recklessly along, and the

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Cevennes watching us from across the river, she said, to my surprise and joy but quite parenthetically, as was her wont when anything was important :

“I’ve thought of a way I can get those Recruits in, without using any prose. I believe it will work. . . .” and after that the Rhone Valley was doubly magnificent. Nicolette bounded and bounded among the pot-holes, the sun broke through a blue gap above the mountains, and in our exultation we drove much too far before stopping for lunch.

We came back to London for the summer term—a brief term, but Lorna insisted on stopping for it; and in another week I had to leave, to start a garden in America. In spite of obstacles and crowded days she managed, as her letters show, to finish *Ramses*, and began very definitely to plan the book on Akhnaton. Again I quote fragments from a few of them.

May 1.

Darling, beloved lamb; I’ve been pretending that I’m not miserable, because I have of my own will imposed this upon us. When I really get to work I shall feel it has more purpose. . . . Today has been annoying; last night I had ——— fairly howling on my shoulder for about one and one-half hours, and it woke me up I expect, so that I slept stiff, and woke this morning limp. Then I didn’t have books to go on with the poem, and I couldn’t do anything else till I finished that, and I had one thousand errands. So I did some of them, and went to Edmund, who was dreadful for the first $\frac{1}{2}$ hour and lovely the last $\frac{1}{2}$. Then I talked to Gaster, then I stewed about trying to collect books, then I lugged 100 lbs. of books to Harley Street, then I bought a quite nice and horribly expensive hat, grey straw with a purple band to match my suit’s line, quite snappy at £2. 9. 0, it ought to be. It was the *only* hat in Bond Street. Then I came home and took tea, and since then I’ve been contemplating the religion of the Amorites and writing letters.

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(Tuesday, at the L.S.E., waiting for Prof. Seligman, who is going to give in 15 minutes his second lecture on the Nile Valley and its people.) It might have been better for me if I *hadn't* been driving through Normandy just a week ago. I wonder what we were doing at just 2:20; leaving the "egg-cup" where we lunched I spec, don't you? I've got the most horrible thick head in the world, and the greatest attack of the self-delighted complacencies you ever saw. This morning after a log-like sleep, I sat down to my table, no, to a cushion by the fire with Remy on a pile of books in front of me, and I typed—oh, this was at 9:05—steadily through all of what were my most awful difficulties of last term, finding a brilliant and complete solution for all of them, though I did take once a half hour to find a word, but it was just right anyway. And after I'd got all my previous difficulties done, I went on to the recruits, and fixed them, and finally finished the whole show. I could now dance on the rooftops, and I don't seem to see any very handy to do it on. . . .

I think I'll aim for a concert at Queen's Hall this evening. A violinist I never heard of, who seems to think he is just wonderful. I'll get a cheap seat and walk out if I don't like him. He plans to fill the Albert Hall next Sunday, so I feel there's hope. . . . I must go, it's just seven and I'm in the W.U.S. reading room. Quite nice and cool at this hour; with the R.O.T.C. being trained outside, not so quiet. Please don't kill yourself, beloved darling. I love you so much you really mustn't you know. And don't worry about me, my life is eminently sensible and full of purpose, which is to sail as soon as possible.

Give my love to every bush. . . .

Friday the 6th

Darling beloved: I've just come to the sound and carefully thought out conclusion that the Ramses poem is no good—it is not poetry, and I've got to change all my ideas for Akhnaton. So I feel, you see, hanging on a very thin thread. However, prose, of what style I can't quite see now, will give me more scope, and I've had great doubts all along. I've been feeling rather sick about it, but after five hours of heavy thought, interspersed with doses of Babylonian and Assyrian religious cults, I begin to see light. If it wasn't so damn muggy I'd take a walk. . . .

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I've spent most of my time thinking this week, very good for one. Incidentally of course I've read two books, but those are minor details. I'm beginning to see real light on Akhnaton now, thank heaven. . . .

I'm sending you this very very, *very* bloody poem because, in the 1st place if I don't I shall probably be unable to keep myself from tearing it up, 2ndly because it will make me quite sick if I look at it again, & 3rdly I hope you'll put me out of my misery, and tell me if you think I'd better cut almost all the lines out and make it merely a fight in the desert of about 30 lines. I could do that very easily. When I'm less sick on the subject. . . . I'm at present so immersed in my work that I am scarcely able to think of anything else. . . . I think it would be better if B. came to stay here, it might stop my brain boiling a little. I do hate to think shop at breakfast, it ruins my day. And I hate to read a novel. So what is there! . . . As I shall presently finish the whatnot, if I don't tear it up, on the Field of the Forty Footsteps, I shall be glad to see her. . . . College seems fairly foul these days, when I have a light suit it may be better, and when I've ceased my literary efforts I suppose I must plunge in, curse it. . . .

I must get to work, I've been being sorry for myself long enough. It would be lovely in the country today. Though we had a real proper thunder shower all blue lightning and everything this A.M. I shall presently take 'my motor car' and go to Pimlico.

Oh dear, darling, why didn't I come with you. I love you to distraction, and I hope you are having a decent time, I suppose you aren't. . .

Thursday.

. . . Isn't this a good vision of a city caught in a famine.

"In the streets where the men went about, hastening hither and thither,
Now the dogs defile her booty,
Her pillage the jackal destroys,
In her banqueting hall the wind holds revel,
Her pillaged streets are desolate."

Oh dear, do you suppose I shall ever get that power of presenting a scene, not as a scene in words, but as a drawing done in words. There is all the

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difference, isn't there. If I have managed to put clearly the minute intricacies of my thought! I imagine I haven't. . . .

I love you so terrifically and tremendously, beloved. What jolly times we'd be having if you were here, dash it.

I must catch that post. Big Ben is doing 12. I feel that you're not taking care of yourself. . . . Please cable me and tell me you're eating enough. I wish I could have you here to hold my hand. You're the whole world, universe, stars and ideals to me, you know. . . .

May 24.

Best beloved, the quiet that is Sunday is upon us, and it seems to me that I have been spending the entire week looking at my own writing. Do you mind if I try Remy for a change . . . Having finally got my eyes in a fairly workable state, and conquered that subtle state of mental lassitude that a steady toothache gives one, I've been working full blast. My numerous errands seem to be getting themselves done very satisfactorily. The only flaw, is that when I've paid Mr. ——'s book bill I wonder if I shall have any money at all. I feel it mounting up my spine like some insidious jungle serpent. I haven't had any time to look at London, so I can't report its progress. We've been having such nice cool damp weather I've been very happy, but now we're broiling again. . . . Darling, I wish I could be coherent and produce literature for your benefit, but my mind is so filled with Egyptology I can't get very far on anything. Did I tell you that G. and I went to the Dybuk Saturday night. I found it from the first words very familiar, and finally decided we'd seen it before. . . . It's a stunning conception, and it has in a way the same type, though not the kind, of atmosphere that I am trying to get into Akhnaton, so I gave it thought. Did I tell you in my last letter that I am getting more and more pleased with the conception of the book. I think it a sufficiently big scheme to really get through. On the strength of this I am acquiring a really sound library, part of which I am having sent straight to the farm, as the flat has all it can hold now, and it's much simpler than re-packing. . . . I've just got ink on the inside of the cuff of one of my *café au lait* shirts. I'm annoyed. . . .

I wonder if the grass was mowed, and how the garden is, and about everything. . . . I've got to put this in the 4 o'clock post to get the

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Majestic, and I must go to Dawes-Hicks. I don't feel like lectures this weather, they are the height of inharmony. And the countryside makes me fret so for you and a horse and Mt. Moses that I find I rest beter in town. I've devised the best scheme for resting I've ever found: I stay in bed and read history. And I arise at 1 P.M. with the energy of a Hercules. Isn't it nice. Well, darling beloved, in less than a month—I I can't wait. It's stupid to keep telling you you're the heaven and earth and stars and all dreams to me, but it seems to fit the situation so well I can't resist. Don't forget to kiss Pud for me, and pat Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Castle, & get your shoulder white on the porch post and forget to brush it off, for me. I do adore you.

LORNA.

May 20.

Beloved one: I'm getting in such a stew about my work that I'm even sacrificing you for it—is not that the worst of all possible derogatory states. . . . I've been working out my book at a great rate, also I have a grape seed in my teeth just now, and I feel, about the book, that it really is a sound conception, and that it justifies the amount of money I'm spending on books. Which is terrific, but not more than I expected. . . . I cabled you so that you'd know I was better before you received all my very sad letters from the middle of toothaches. I didn't have one for about three hours today, for the first time in ten days. Isn't it topping. . . . If you were here all would be well. . . . That book is taking form remarkably. I've simply got to sweat my eyes out now. I apologize for my letters. . . .

P.S. There's a book I very much want but don't frantically need at eight quid. I wish I could decide whether I was justified in getting it. I shall be able to sell it for £25 in a short time, so it wouldn't be exactly a loss. But of course I never should (sell it). If I'm going to permeate my stuff with the spirit of the East I've naturally got to read the East. And these are translations of Babylonian poems, ripping they are.

June 3.

. . . My last lecture on Wednesday, or perhaps Thursday. I'm not sure, but I think it is. This institution is so concerned with celebrating

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its birthday that it can't manage to fulfil its function and purpose. I'm glad I'm going down. I have a fever to embark upon the great world. Having thought I'd done it once before, I feel it's rather a second birth, of a very feeble nature. It's causing me a few humorous quirks of the right eyebrow. . . .

I've been racing madly all day, finishing off by dining with the ——s who took a great deal out of me, as I had to be well informed. I went to the theatre last night with that S——— woman, you know, and she destroyed my soul so I couldn't sleep before I regained it, & that was 1:15. The B.B. goes everywhere, and is gaining much experience. . . . What a life it is. And this is the next to the last letter I shall write you, *realize that*. Cheers, cheers, cheers. I always feel so tight inside when we are apart, it is a hellish feeling. . . . I've been doing *so many* things. Today I bought a vile leather trunk: there was one for 20 quid I'd have given my heart but not 20 quid to possess. I got also Amy's last volume, and found it much more worth while than I expected. . . . I've left the B.B. all alone in Little Smith Street too.

I'm well, fairly that is; soon I shall have my false tooth, and presently, thank god, the immense vacuity of the sea. . . . My head is cracking. You are the world's best lamb. We meet in 15 days, it's too wonderful to be true.

LORNA.

Fragmentary as these bits from the letters are, they give her indescribable spirit; also the vivid expression of it—even in this unconsidered prose, dashed off at the last minute to catch a boat.

Strenuous weeks, these last, with plans for the Akhnaton book pushing so hard that even the prized university work began to pall; though they had asked her, if she returned another year, to stand for the presidency of "Wus"—the Woman's Union Society; a post equivalent to that of President of Students at one of our women's colleges; a rather remarkable tribute to a foreign student, previously quite unknown.

But she did not intend to go back, except for more reading;

a sense of maturity and power was growing fast upon her. "I have a fever to embark upon the great world."

And now she was longing to get home. Even in those crowded weeks she managed to write and send me the delightful little poem "Space," which, labouring in "the new green," I treasured. London was fascinating, but the child loved our hills; and even over there in the midst of riches could write verses about them. Late in June, boxes of books began to arrive. Twenty-seven parcels, I was notified, were on the way from her bookshop in Charing Cross; and lead-like parcels they were. Gauzy materials for a summer's diversion! But they were like bits of her coming to me. I had been having her study in the ell, with its charming mountain view, "done over"; and there the "really sound library" was piled. Thrilling books: Egypt, Egypt and more Egypt; Persia, India, Babylonia; Spanish Art, Chinese Poetry; Chaldean Hymns, the Poems of Hafiz; nine volumes of the Golden Bough; volumes on Akhnaton. Many of them were valuable books out of print and hard to find, advertised and searched for by her London booksellers; one of whom actually wrote telling me of "the pleasure it had been to find books for Miss Greene"—just one instance of the kindness we have always found in England.

I went to New York to meet her and the "Baby," the tiny Austin car she was bringing over, its back seat occupied with yet another box, also heavy with books; and straight north we drove, fairly on one wheel around corners, such was her haste to see Vermont, and

. . . those hills

That are the houses of my heart.

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At the first sight of it, the first little grey farm, she was quite overcome.

Very tired again; sleep difficult to attain; but she would set to work. Reading immense tomes—with that devouring concentration which stamps on the brain what is once read; coming out late in the afternoon to drive a little in the Austin, or mount Pud for a short ride. "I don't feel like Donlinna yet," she said pathetically; so good Pud was his mistress's comfort. But she finished "The Field of the Forty Footsteps," whose theme is drawn from a legend concerning a field near the university buildings—a legend said to have been confirmed in 1820 by the poet Southey, who visited the field and counted the fatal footsteps over which, for a century or more, the grass had refused to grow! The poem, strikingly done throughout, with its inclusion of much material in a brief space, is specially noteworthy for the beautifully-phrased philosophy of the second stanza.

All summer she had some verses in mind on Sherburne Valley,—verses that never were actually begun; also she wrote "Morning Moods," with its beautiful and distinguished description of Paris, and the lines about London that bring the old city so vividly to mind:

London, rousing herself to
A June day, a
Soft giant turning very
Gently . . .

More than all, she arrived at a point of perspective where she could change her feeling about the Ramses poem. My opinion of it perhaps counted a little; even a youthful friend who took it

up rather in dread of its being "very deep," had exclaimed in pleased surprise, "Why, it's *exciting!*" It is. Other and different minds have found it so; and Viola Roseboro' has sent me what she, with the never-failing humility of the great, calls "the poor effort to say something not all unworthy of my feeling for the poem":

This child here in 'Ramses before the Walls of Kadesh' makes old Egypt and its people live to me; and I am an old, though not a learned, wandered among letters. The learned generally fail in historic imagination, but here it is—that priceless thing that Sir Walter Raleigh pronounces more valuable than great knowledge of historical facts—and combined too with the fine accurate beginnings of a scholarship that was to be always dedicate to works of the imagination.

As Miss Roseboro' said to me at the time, looking at me with that benevolent illumination, that power of conviction, which I have rarely seen equaled in a human being: "My dear, this is the first thing of the kind, on Egypt, I have ever read, *in all my life*, that was not smothered by scholarship. Why—this is exciting. This is Drama! and yet here is the scholarship, behind it. . . ."

Even its author, unsparing in judgment of her own work, began at last to see its quality; to realize that this development of her vers libre, helped by her familiarity with ancient verse-form (particularly the Chaldean, stronger in its rhythms than the beautiful but more lethargic method of most Chinese versists), was one befitting a great theme; and that after this manner the epic of Akhnaton would be written. For as Miss Roseboro' also said of the Ramses poem, "This—to me at least—is where vers libre is at its best; in dramatic narrative, dealing with great events." The adapting of Chaldean technique to Egyptian

INTRODUCTION

material was Lorna's own conception, drawn from much study and creative brooding; critics and literateurs, alike, tell me it was a signal discovery of method which, carried out by some one as conversant with the epoch yet as strong in dramatic imagination, might well have led to results of incomparable interest. No one more than she realized the cultural distances yet to be traversed, the philosophic heights, the deeps of research, dark to the indifferent eye, but to the young scholar-poet forever lighted by passionate devotion and delight; and to achieve this no one, as has been said of Blake, "ever lived and laboured in hotter earnest." She meant to take years—a lifetime, if necessary—in doing it; to know her ground with an absolute thoroughness; and all the time her power, nascent, yet already acknowledged, would have been incalculably growing.

More and more, and with an ever deepening sense of loss and tragedy, as I read Breasted's Egypt, or Arthur Weigall's book on Akhnaton, I realize how perfectly the young, poetic, and idealistic Pharaoh was fitted for such an epic; how at every point, he suited Lorna's nature, and drew out her profoundest admiration; how she felt instinctively akin to him, his tastes and his visions, and utterly at home in his atmosphere. And it is under those conditions that one does one's best work. A lovable young dreamer, Akhnaton; who founded a new religion and a new art in Egypt, and planned a new "city of beauty" when he was nineteen; who loved nature and outdoors and his children, and in spite of fabulous wealth was "the first apostle of the simple life"; who preached that strange thing in Egypt, a compassionate and tender God, wrote a hymn to Aton as beautiful as, and oddly similar to, the hundred and fourteenth psalm; and in that age of conquest and oppression, objected to war and had dreams of the

equality of man.

Material here for a life-work. The beauty of Thebes and all it held; the visions, the deeds, the spiritual beauty and ultimate tragedy of the young king. I can see the thing of loveliness and greatness it would have been; and for which she with her wide vision and opportunities would one day have been so idyllically prepared. She was a good "planner"; things that she thought about "came out." She would have accomplished Akhnaton, and accomplished him adequately. Magnificently, says my calm faith in her; a faith she never once disappointed; a faith with which she inspired every one.

But no scholar ever feels himself prepared. "I *must* go back for three months at least in the B. M.! They've got things there I can't possibly get anywhere else," said she insatiably, in July; and in her study, with the new library stacked on tables till sepecial bookcases could be built, set valorously at work. Exacting and difficult work; making voluminous notes for her book in that small handwriting so excellent for the purpose, yet never tight or priggish-looking; somehow with a careless largeness about it, an unexigeant slurring of vowels, a broad-minded run-along of consonants, very characteristic of her. On her work-table I found these three lines, from *The Ring and the Book*, lying, as if freshly written :

Who had trod many lands, known many deeds,
Probed many hearts, beginning with his own,
And now was far in readiness for God.

These lines, in her studious yet care-free writing, touch me very strangely. There is an atmosphere about them, a calm beauty,

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not unlike herself; a literal suggestion too. Well as I fancied I knew the poem, I had never even noticed this noble fragment from the first chapter; but her perceptive eye picked it unfailingly out. It was the last piece of verse she thought of, the heart of her as she mused there, looking at the hills.

And her selection of that piece means very much—so much that those lines have become, to me, quite part of herself. She would one day have written that way herself: she had that breadth, that calm touch, that far look upon the worlds, that power over a comprehensive phrase.

Work had to be laid aside in August for a session with hospital and tonsils—which solved the sleeplessness; and after a fortnight at our cabin in the pines at Cotuit, we returned to the farm quite made over. Lorna's full strength came back slowly, but it came; the garden was beautiful, the sun shone, our hills looked more charming than ever. One more poem she wrote, the lovely and distinguished interpretation called "Autumn Moonlight"; those who have ridden the dark woods under an autumn moon will know the strange glamour, the "formless space," of such a night.

Great was her recovered energy; an energy as notable and victorious as in her early youth. She motored me about the country: to Charlotte for new plants for the garden, to Silver Lake for swims; we had riding trips and picnics with friends. On Labour Day we had a particularly beautiful one quite to ourselves, in Wilderness Pasture and all that lovely, lost region of spruces and mountains; an apple-wood fire, the horses wandering about, Gli and Fleur beside us. "Must get Donlinna shod," she announced one morning. "I feel like tackling her now!" How good it was to hear that. Almost every day came, "I *must* get to work, A. B. I'm simply spoiling to begin!" and once, with

such a serious and heartfelt look :

“ I’m beginning my life-work, you know.”

September sped along.

“ I never saw her so beautiful,” said a friend one day, watching with love the cameo-like head above a crimson “ mac,” as my child bent over, zealously dusting off the beloved “ Baby.” It was a gray day, and against the green of the little orchard she looked like a camelia blossom in that “ mac ”; a dark camelia blossom, full of intellect—and laughter. “ And she looks so happy now,” said the friend, still dreaming on that face.

She was. She had earned the respect and love of those she admired most; had come through the hard things of early youth to where all looked fair and happy—above all to a sense of power, and the feeling, supreme among joys, that her work was a clear way before her. The world, full of delightful invitation, stretched before us; yet revolving, now as always, about our “ jobs.”

Saturday, the twenty-fourth, was a glorious day, with great white clouds in a blue sky, and Lorna, with two friends who were staying with us, started off for Sherburne Valley in the Austin.

“ I think I can get some notes for the poem,” Lorna confided to me as she climbed in. The little car held only three comfortably; her brown face smiled back at me. I watched them down the hill, and went in to my work.

They had a wonderful day. They lunched at our friend Mrs. Currier’s little gray farmhouse in the valley, explored fields and woods, saw consummate views of Killington and the other mountains, and took the Baby triumphantly down roads resembling the bed of a brook. But there was trouble with the magneto

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on the way home, and my Babs, alone in a borrowed car, was hastening to the rescue of her stranded friends, when the end, so undreamed of, came. We had planned for everything, but not for that.

The poem on Sherburne Valley was never written. It would have been a glorious poem; lovely and perceptive in some new way. She had it all planned; the three lights—dawn, sunset, and the moon rising over East Mountain.

"But I want to go and camp there first, and study it," she explained to me. "I want to see the moon go all the way over to the Killington side. I want to have lots of *time!*"

And if that was her scholarly way with moonlight—? In the same way, with even greater devotion, she would have done the epic on Akhnaton. . . . For she had the divine vision. Her heart was big toward the troubles of the world, but the scope of her poetry would have been large; so large I think that it would have included all the energies of her heart and mind. Large, like Browning's, but never uncouth or tedious or prolix; for delicate with a spring-time beauty, free and flinging like Shelley's lark, loose and released like that dear Fancy of Keats ("O sweet Fancy, let her loose!") were her imagination and her gift of words.

The poems are here; foreshadowing what she would have spent her life creating. They cannot give what she was, but they give a little of her spirit. They are what she did, and loved so in the doing.

STAR HILL, *July* 30, 1928.

FOR L. G.

(Written by a University friend, Bertha Gaster)

If I were a poet, I would make you live again.
Your black head, your boy's head, with a woman's chiselled lips.
I would bring your nervous brown hands back again,
Your long brown fingers, beautiful to us,
Lifting a cigarette to your lips.

If I were a poet you should live again in the college,
Up on the steps, half-turning to go, yet staying;
And your low appreciative laugh, and your wit
And your nimble mind, gone past recalling,
And all the riches of your companionship.

I cannot bring you to my eyes again, or call you back.
You, who were a poet, forgive me.
This is all I can give you.
Lorna, take this for our brief friendship.

B. G.

MORNING MOODS

And Other Poems

MORNING MOODS

POEMS OF

1922 and 1923

MY UNIVERSE

FRAGRANT hay upon my shoulder,
Yellow lantern light at my feet,
Slippery path delaying me—
My heart is at your door.

For you I work my way to fame,
Because of you I tread the path of ease.
To you belongs my mind—
To you I owe my soul.

Dim hills and misty valleys,
A slip of moon over sombre woods,
Endless white fields
And dripping trees:
Through you I felt their being,
From you I gained their value,
You are the centre of them all.

A MOMENT IN LIFE

DIM mountains laid on sky,
Ascutney bold of outline against the drifting clouds,
Soft folds of yellow hill lapping into woods;
A cloud shadow carelessly blackening mellow valleys—
Nature in one touch revealed her wonder,
A whitethroat sang his ode!

WITCHERY

POPLARS with a Whistler-like sparseness
Were swept upon the moon-lit sky.
Black shadows lay across the road;
In a silken white light a bare hillock gave
Contrast to black woods.
The brook burred deep in murky shadows.

FAMILIAR PLACES

THE sleet against the window-pane,
The howling of the wind around the corners—
How I love to sit on my hill
And watch the storm across the valley.

There is no place a storm makes so sweet
As my house with its own familiar view.
If I am in unknown lands in a storm
I long to get beyond those eclipsing curtains.

I want to see the far-off horizon,
And all that the eye can picture;
A storm sweeping against strange tree-tops
Brings no thrill to me with its beauty.

But when I see the dooryard cherry-trees
And the line of wall struggling up the hill,
When I know each hollow and every stream
Between me and the last hill, then I am content.

I HAVE GONE

I HAVE gone, I have gone
To the sky,
And all the world
Laughs with me in trembling
Ecstasy.
I float on rose-capped peaks;
The mutter of thunder is below,
But above is the blue and love,
And I shall soar there
Until those mounting purple clouds
Cover me again with gloom.

TRANSLUCENT

Down, down through waves of sleep
I dropped into caves of slumber.
A cloak of dreamland slipped over me,
I was gone from the vicissitudes of life,
I was in a land of colour.
The flickery firelight faded
Into nothingness.
In my head
The purr of the cat, hanging on a thread,
Snapped.
I was free.

A rattle of wood on brick roused me,
Smoke filled my eyes,
Hot leather made a stench in my nostrils.
A blazing log was at my feet.
Gone were my visions;
The room, the cat, the tumbled fire
Brought me to the material,
Which I had dreamed was so far away.

HILLSIDE FOG

(Fragment)

THE white limbs of a birch
Shone from out the foggy evergreens,
Like love against the murkiness of life.
A lone maple, protected from the wind,
Blazed in primitive glory on the hillside,
For all else was encased in drifting mist.
High up, faint, bare tree-tops
Appeared to wander aimlessly around,
As if not satisfied. . . .

UNBEKNOWN

(To M. W. M.)

You never knew what delight
You gave a lonely heart that day.
You were tired and worn with the cares of this world,
Yet you opened your doors to me and talked—
Talked as if I was a person of importance.
You took me from my sordid troubles,
You lifted me to the heights,
And all the time you knew it not.

Flower of modesty that you are,
You never guessed what pleasure
The soft green folds of your gown,
With its slender, graceful lines,
Gave to me who was so hungry
For the graces and willowy pleasures of life.
Your eyes filled with understanding sympathy
Stirred my soul from its world of work and longing.

A HILL-LOVER ENTERS NEW YORK

MORNING mist wavered among the buildings.
Here and there a heap of lights
Shone in yellow masses.
New York at seven, over the water,
A nest of murk and crime,
And yet how beautiful !

From the calm of the hills
The roar of the city strikes
Like black snow against the purity of love;
And the strife of commerce
Hurts the simplicity of soul
That belongs to a worker of the land.

SPLENDOURS THAT FADED

A BURST of sun-glory
That made pink magic
Of soft-topped woods,
And torches of their trunks;

The sun, worn with his day,
Dipped behind a cloud—
The woods were drab and bare!
Like the heart,
When after a great moment
One stands once more
Up to the drudgeries of life,
And wonders, with a sigh,
How this soul,
Concerned with dish-washing,
Could lift itself to rose-capped peaks.

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

YOUR brilliant gray eyes
Veiled by a cloak of understanding;
Did you ever see with them
That the heart of a school-girl was at your feet?
And now that selfsame child,
Grown to womanhood and pity,
Knows how you gave yourself for us.

She felt it then—she knows it now.
Bound by the reserve of ardour,
She could only look from afar
And seek the words that never came
To check your reckless sacrifice.

Year by year she saw you withering,
As the flame within devoured you.
Year by year the talent in her
Blazed under your care;
Till a hand-shake snapped the thread,
And you were lost, with youth, forever.

C'EST MOI

DARK, empty, stupid,
Tall—that's me.
Hair (as *she* said)
Slicked back like an onion
Just out of the garden.

Always fishing,
Always hoping,
Always receiving,
Never deserving—
That's me.

What do I do?
Nothing!
Except talk,
Eat, and spin satire.
What a life—
With hair four feet long.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 17, 1923

WASHINGTON is a peculiar place
Full of squares,
Where one gets lost,
And meets all the high-lights.

There a French chateau,
Here an A. and P.;
Joan of Arc on a hill
With mud all around,
Looking down on embassies.

Broad streets, new buildings,
Surrounded by regrets.
Lost grass mourned.
Progress scorned—
All because of vanished air.

What a mixture,
What an atmosphere
To weep in,
For bygone wire-pullers!

A MOOD

My soul was rent with discord and hurry,
My heart by an appeal
Unanswerable
Because it concerned the mind of another.
I cursed myself,
The world,
And the fact of life.

Then I climbed a hill.
The sun
Showered a spray of gold
Through yellow-leaved trees
Into the valley below.
It dipped behind blue hills.

I awoke from my bitterness.
I chided myself for my gloom.
As the last light from the sun
Gave way to purple shadows on earth,
His gold was in my heart.

TO THE EARLY-BLOOMING BLOODROOT

LITTLE cups of white
Prodding your way
Out of the brown, snow-flattened grass;
I blessed you,
For you gave hope
Of the melting of the snows.

To make you possible
The brooks roared,
And the hills turned blue,
The wood-tops pink and thick,
The hot sun shone,
And I rode about with joy in my heart,
On that April day.

* * *

Bloodroot!
Frail, starry points
Thrust through matted weeds
Beside the green waters' rushing,

TO THE EARLY-BLOOMING BLOODROOT

You lightened that drab bank
And made spring come
To my heart
And to the winter-weary earth.

MISTY TEMPTATION

I AM torn by a thousand moods
And the sun shines red
Over the smoky hills.
I know not what I want,
Yet a pounding in my heart
Makes me thirst
For the wild whirl of the traffic.
The sunset in the trees
Brings tears to my eyes;
The soft call of a thrush
Soothes me for the moment,
And I shudder
As I think of the clatter
And heat of the streets.
But I am pressed by a thousand moods,
And the hills hold misty temptation.

ON A MOUNTAIN-TOP

THE cloud is down upon me.
Balsams, like minarets in some Eastern town,
Fall away below.
The world is so big now it's mist-covered,
Can I tell where earth and sky meet?

That is the only boundary
Which man cannot upset,
Would it not be well for the peace of us
If it were the only one?

But I am covered by cloud
And have little mind for problems.
The rocks scarred by egoistic men
With their initials
Flaunt the curse of hideousness in my face.

The white cloud falls over me
In thickened mats;

ON A MOUNTAIN-TOP

My jangling nerves forget the roar of the world.
One clear note from a bird
Is the only sound—
I lose my identity in the drifting white.

THE BORROWED HAT

SHE borrowed my hat
And went around
Flashing her eyes at me
And making jest.
She and the hat
Danced down the street
To the tune of a clanging trolley,
The lights flashed golden,
The motors purred,
And all the world laughed at her piquancy.

Meditating in the rear,
I wondered if the hat
Would not have in the end
Given the world more pleasure,
If it covered her small surety
Rather than my sombre braids.
But I loved the hat
And I gave it not to her!

MY SILVER MEADOW

O YE of the clever feet
And fluting voices,
Come and dance in my silver meadow
Under the white moonlight.

Come while I'm yet young
And can join your thrilling laughter;
For to you
I leave my heritage—
The silver meadow
Under the white moonlight.

DRIFTINGS OF YOUTH

PASSIONS war in me
And I find no outlet.
Even a sight of the hills,
Blue and uplifting,
Dim and gigantic
Under a flaming sunset sky,
Brings no healing.

The champ of my horse's bit
Seems like the clashings of a tormented world.
The tong of a cow-bell
Carries no longer a hint of beauty.

The sun, hard and red,
Sinks away into grayness.
Oh, that my passions might sink too
Into some blackness,
Letting the night
Drift me to rose-walled temples
And the hiss of little waves on the beach.

MY GREY HOUSE

Nor even the zest of
Exploring foreign lands,
Not even the sea itself,
Huge and blue and sparkling,
Can smear the smart
In my heart
When I think of my house
On the hill.

I want to go,
I want to stay—
The house never says no,
It sits on its hill,
And the pink flowers flutter
Over its old grey sides.

MUSIC AND WATER

THE silver Thames flickered
Shadow and sun-colour
Outside my window.
A tree flung its leaves
In flowering patterns
On the gleaming surface
Of river and sky.

Chopin's fluttering notes
From below
Sent my emotions dancing
Like the leaves of the tree.
Swans, making endless movement
On the flapping water,
Bobbled over the light and dark
Of the sheeny river.
And all the time
Music cast its spell over me
Like the tide rushing on to the mud flats.

MUSIC AND WATER

The quick pant of the thing kept on,
The river had changed to ominous lead;
And I was blown on a torrent
Of rushing notes
Like the swans by the tide
Of the river of mystery.

THE NIGHT OF A FROST

THE wind blows the world silver,
The moon casts a cloak of coldness.
An orange glow in the west
Under sullen purple clouds,
Fails it its attempt to cheer,
Like some old woman
In a ball-gown of grey, who,
Piqued that she goes unmarked,
Torments herself in brilliancy.

The world is cold and silver,
And the north wind
Scurrying in the tree-tops
Chants the death of
All that grew.

THE FLIGHT OF IGOR

I DREAMED a queer fantasy one night.
It was of a war, weird and colourful;
And interwoven through my meshes
Golden threads from another's brain
Went fluttering. . . .

It was of the flight of Igor,
A Tartar prince; of wars that made
“ The black earth sowed with bones
And watered with blood.”
The legions of the Turk
Came up in ghostly lines,
And from the crest of the hill
“ Ran over the plain like grey wolves,
Their carts creaking like swans let loose at night.”

The Russians “ barred the way with their purple shields ”;
There was a blood-red dawn;
The swords glittered in the blinding mist,
And Igor sped away before the Turk
“ Like a white ermine in the rushes.”

THE FLIGHT OF IGOR

“ ‘O wind, O wind,’ the Russians moaned,
‘ Why dost thou carry the arrow
So fast and far?’ ”

Arrows come “ like birds from the sea,”
They fly “ like a falcon in the mist ”;
“ The ramparts of the city are silent with sorrow.”

My dream passed.

I had been emeshed in some far fantasy;
But still the arrows ceased not flying
In that mass of men and mist and blood,
And I still saw the ramparts of the cities
That were silent with sorrow.

NOTE: I am indebted to Prince D. Svyatopolk Mirsky for the translation of the fragments from the Russian. L. G.

POEMS OF

1924

A CONCERT AND AFTERWARD

THE East, Rimsky-Korsakov,
Sheeny moonlight on a slumbering lagoon,
The crackle of wind in a palm-tree
The Prince on the balcony,
Looking
Above the white streets,
Above the whispering life of the town,
Over the silent water.
The Princess comes
In pearly white,
With jewels that sparkle and gleam;
An orange lantern hangs far off,
Lighting the curving edge of the beach.

Courtesy, white whiskers,
Snuff-boxes,
Mozart at his most delicate.
Ladies flaunt their ruffs,
Gallants finger their swords,

THE CONCERT AND AFTERWARD

Lackeys in blue and buff,
Powdered hair, unseeing eyes,
Pass in the quaint picture.

The Fire Bird rushes in,
A flash of flame
On purple mutterings,
Mad turmoil, mad swayings
Of strings—Stravinsky.

The roar of applause,
The rattle of upturning seats,
The noise and light of the streets—
London,
Mistress of gleaming distance.

A SPRING SUN SHINES ON CHELSEA

A SPRING sun shines on Chelsea,
The bells of Sunday morning
Come in plaintive see-saws
Across the river.

The people of World's End
Walk by the water
In their new, clean clothes.
They watch the sea-gulls
Milling in the gleaming sky
And feed them,
When they fly in frantic hordes
Above the wrought-iron lamp posts.

The people of the slums
Gossip in the warming,
Heaven-sent sunlight,
And their children make

A SPRING SUN SHINES ON CHELSEA

Harsh cries,
Which ring against the calm house-fronts
And split the sheeny ecstasy
Of a London Sunday.

A CITY AT 4 A.M.

QUIET, quiet, quiet,
Its weight presses me down
By its strangeness
Into an unknown mood.

The black, empty streets,
Footways void of the throng,
Windows, opaque walls of curtains;
How quiet!

Grey mist gathers
Where people should be pressing.
The corners, blown clear,
Open their arms to nothingness;
Streets stretch dark to mileless vistas.
I hug the certainty of my taxi
With a gasp.
The emptiness, where thousands should be,
Fills me with terror.

A CITY AT 4 A. M.

How is it so still?
Will it some day be like this,
Forever?

Then the station looms up,
Misty, black, prosaic.
No,
Reality, dusty and powerful,
Will preserve itself!

ON A NIGHT TRAIN IN FRANCE

I LEAN out of the train window,
The quiet night is there,
A line of blackness, a hill perhaps;
Above, gray sky
And stars, which I try to name.

The Quiet Night is there,
And a village.
Two lights glinting in my eyes
Light up the shell-torn roofs,
Under them, blackness,
And the memory of death.

A few cinders, floating
In our wake, hit me on the cheek.
The engine shoots up goutts of flame
Which changes our dull smoke
To a pillared cloud of magic colour.

ON A NIGHT TRAIN IN FRANCE

The flame droops;
Out there is utter silence,
Around me light, litter,
And the clatter of Latin speech;
Mine own slow tongue seems alien,
As does my love of that silent world.

THE SPRING BREAK-UP AT NIGHT

It is all so big,
No words of mine
Can catch its tender tranquillity;
When little summery brooks
Rush clear
And swift, like
Those of Italian hills;
When frogs make
Slender silver sound,
And the eaves drip
Intermittently,
From fast-departing snow.

That smell of snow
And grass running down
The hills together,
In mad search
For spring—
It is all too tranquil,

THE SPRING BREAK-UP AT NIGHT

Full of notes that
Are neither black nor white,
For my poor fingers
To put on paper
That once lived
And breathed and knew,
With such greater sympathy,
This same gray world.

MAY CHORES

WHEN I'm tied
To the pots and pans and cakes of life,
And a May day outside
Is blowing yellow tree-tops,
Throwing leaves
Over a fair blue sky
And down far, green meadows,
Horrible and ancient as it is—
On a May day
I could keep a slave.

THOUGHTS WHILE HUNTING WOODCHUCKS

My rifle, cold and ready,
Lies cocked upon my knee;
Destroyer,
Does it care for
Warm September sunlight,
Thick blue cloud shadows,
The rush of chilly wind?
Or is it thinking only
Of that yellow head
Which we expect to
Pop out of the bunch
Of bright green grass
Just over the rise,
And whistle—his last note?
A chill, ugly thing
A gun,
Why am I fond of this one?

RIDING HOME AT DARK

(With Saddle-bags)

THE rattle of spoons,
The clash of shod feet on stones,
Smiles refused by brown eyes,
Frowned on by furry ears.
Warmed by leaping flame,
Cooled by dim, dark valleys—
A fiery planet over dark trees,
A smell of frozen flowers—
Ah, my hills!
Never the same, never forgot.

EVENING

A MOON full
In a sky made
Feathery with cloud.
The October hills have
Gone mad—
Crimson, flame, mauve
And gold,
All blended together now
In a dusky glow.
But the moon doesn't care,
She is round as always,
Yellow, enchanting,
And the hills make
Salaams to her
In shadow form.

REMEMBERING LONDON

Euston, the gateway
To that
Place of gorgeous, mirky streets,
Of yellow fog that
Makes enchanted
Alleyways and buildings,
Those streets gay
Through rain and slime;
Shop windows filled
To their skies
With unruly clothing,
So that I,
From the top of my red bus,
May be tempted from
That jerky perch;
I shall never, never
Jog on to that tea-filled,
Firelit eternity,
Where I know
Go the red buses.

FIVE MINUTES AFTER SUNRISE

ORANGE bars of hot sunlight
Across a cold, white world.
On my yellow wall,
Chill lines of pink-lavender
Tree-tops.
Darkness on fairy virginity;
Warm tints on it,
Delicate shadows of blue,
Like airy colour
Over a wedding-dress.

CLEARING THE WATERING-TROUGH

A COLD gray morning
Filled with storm to be.
The water flicks with chill
Green, brown, water colours
In my face,
As I bend over it,
Flashing gleaming ice
On to the hard brown earth;
No softness, no sympathy.
Cold gray, cold green, cold brown,
And the flying splinters of
Dull white ice.

POEMS OF

1925

TCHAIKOVSKY

(Suite from the Ballet "Casse-Noisette," Opus 71, a.)

THE orchestra is sending me
The teasing rhythms of
Slavic hordes,
The rushes of hot-breathed
Enraged ones.

A movement next, filled
With all the sweetness
Of daffodils nodding
Pleasantly over stony streets;
I hear meaningless,
Murmurous tinkles that
Convey
The hopeless patience
Of the East.

My heart is thrust into
A tangled web of juggled
Harmonies;
After Beethoven's fifth,

TCHAIKOVSKY

The Danse Russe is
A Voice direct
From this world,
Made of minor keys and
Fitful movements.

A RECITAL

RACHMANINOFF,
Moods, slams, tinkles,
Fed with minor bubbles
When we came for the
Rich and gorgeous;
O Rachmaninoff,
Man of haunting genius,
Why must you display
Your technique at such length?
Chill notes falling on a
Throbbing heart,
Notes like single drops of clear water
Dripping endlessly into space. . . .

SELF-DISGUST

HEDGED in by vain and
Shallow things,
Dulled to a round of
Grotesque broodings,
By a brain whose
Sentimental meditations
Refuse to awake to
Work and a sense of power;

Then that inner insect—
Some call it a sense of
Duty, I believe—
Stirs; and the brain
Questions: Duty?
To what? Oh, fragile,
Artificial thing of a
Made-up world!
When then that thing,
Stronger than one's
Visible self,

SELF-DISGUST

Known by some power
Who sees
What we can but feel,
Says, "Worm,
You waste your life—"
Something subtler still
Mutters, "One has
Judged your fruit of
Joyous hours, cast it
To realms of the dull;
Do you then forfeit what,
In days of ironic idleness?"

A DANCER

(To M. L.)

SHE is an elf of many phrases,
Whitely oval like a Paris butterfly,
Curled into frank joy
That only Anglo-Saxons flavour,
Lost in Slavic storminess
To flash to
Rippling Latin laughter;
My dear, you have never
Guessed my delight
And love,
In every lift of those
Whimsical eyebrows.

PICTURES FROM *SINBAD'S SHIP*

(*Rimsky-Korsakov, Symphonic Suite, Opus 35*)

THE story of Sinbad's Ship
Played by magic strings;
Why should I see a
Blue ocean
Washing gray-white sands
That I have never trod,—
Sails red, like
Those of Venice?
I saw those things,
Long before I
Ever dropped from
Stony flights of steps
Into a lapping gondola.
I beheld those sails,
With eyes that marvelled
At an unremembered past.

The music is soft melody
As of Italian voices.

PICTURES FROM *SINBAD'S SHIP*

It starts, quivers, triumphs,
Like sheer white Alps
Peering across a
Cobalt bay.
It holds the taunt of
Age-old worlds;
And I am lost
In pictures wrought by music,
Formed in a swallowed past,
As the sloping sails
Put out across to
Unbelievable Alps.

A CHOPIN *LARGO*

NOTES that hold the
Sob of the earth,
The hidden sorrow of life,
The grandeur of storm.
White storm,
Over gray rocks;
White bodies flung in brutal scorn
Into the cliffs,
By the leaden sea.
Cold, crashing storm,
Undernotes of fury—
The lash of seaweed,
The grind of sand.

Later, the lull,
When the gray rocks,
Wet,
Drip into the sand.

THE NUMBERED DAYS OF SPRING

IN a far corner of
Some forgotten valley
I shall seek a windless nook,
And from it I shall watch
The numbered days of spring.
A week ago I said farewell
To the fairy green of
Poplar bays
On purple-misted hills;
To-morrow I shall sigh
My last to yellow violets
And velvet purple ones—
Big as a plum they were;
My heart finds elation
In every delicate form
Which forbodes the coming
Of the wood aisles' weighty
Habitant, Summer.

ORIENTAL POPPIES

ELEVEN poppies flopped over
Their dark-green foliage.
Scarlet, dull though flaming,
Were they,
With strong brush strokes
Of brown on each petal.

They swayed in the
South wind;
Their huge heads
Nodded stupidly over
The dark earth path.

Ellen watched them
At all times.
She loved them
As the morning sun
Shot in slanting, shifting
Lights,
Through their petals.

ORIENTAL POPPIES

She loved them when
The gray rain-mist
Flung itself across the
Valleys and woods,
And they were the one
Note
In that world of changing greens.

She loved them most
In the afterglow,
When their brilliancy
Bit,
And they stood upright,
Silent, glowing.

LEAVES

LEAVES, fretted into patterns; patterns
Fitted on a bald clean sky. They move
To make holes for fairy blue; they change
To show black demon thunderheads. They
Lift to make music, they bow with a long
Swift sigh. Leaves under my head, lifeless,
Crackling, brown; leaves over my head, mad
Vivid things, full of passion for life, doing
Their ballet to a June sky, drowning the
Robin's voice with their song.
Mad leaves, teach me your zest!

THE GLORY OF SOUND

I SLEPT while the world awoke;
But as the glory of the sunrise
Tipped the hemlock-hooded hills with amethyst,
And the birds threw up a mighty sound
That blew the stillness far away,
I aroused myself.

Just as the sun
Came over the cold forbidding hill above me—
A mill-whistle
Sounded and echoed from far below.
It went piping down one ravine,
To smite a rock
And leap back against some other enfolded cliff;
Died,
To spring up in some odd corner
And then, tauntingly, appear to fade once more.

It broke upon that hush
That the birds felt as they watched the sun,
And thrust life, work, day
Into my dreamy ponderings.

VISION

A SOUL stood black before
My eyes
And writhed, in its pain.
The cold mass of the mountains stood
There too, scarred like the soul,
Though not with pain.
They had none of the sweep of
The sea; they reached to heights,
But they had never fathomed the
Theme of Time,
They had never battled with
The curse of crossed currents,
They had never fought some
Hundred strings of desire.
The soul had done this.
I beheld its panting.

ONLY ONE WORD

THE world crashing about my
Ears in desperate turmoil,
All my work laid before me
And only one word have I.

That is, to be sure, a
Magic word, full of mystery
Of tragedy and of delight;
Only that one word I have,
I love it—
But I should like to find
A key to it that would lead
Beyond this limit,
That would bring me to
Sunlight, and seas
Dreaming under the moon.

BEAUTY LOST

I scuff among pages
That are lighted vistas of pleasure,
And bitter thoughts are not mine.
I tramp along a narrow lane.
No bitter thoughts are mine,
Only delight in far, thin tree-tops,
And the whuff of
Starlings' wings as they pass.

The city streets fly out
Before me. Buses
Red and green and orange
Dodge among the taxis.
Shop windows are ugly, often,
And a cold wind
Hisses through the fog.
But no bitter thoughts are mine.

One morning I sat down to work,
I turned to my pages
Of inspiration,

BEAUTY LOST

Bitter thoughts were mine,
And the beauty of those lines
Seemed drab. It
Was all because one gave me
Coal dust, when I asked for gold.

POEMS OF

1926

A SEA-GULL'S FREEDOM

I SHOULD like to be a sea-gull;
The trivial clatter of the city I
Should lose in the centre
Of the slightly tossing river;
Just its dreamy, towered edges
Would dwindle into a purple haze,
For me.

I should fly under bridges where
The noise of the traffic batted
Like ten thousand of my people
In a cliff by a surf-lashed coast;
I should lose myself in
Gleaming distances, and break
The silence of gray morning
With my lightly scattered temper;
And some day, perhaps, my
Love might come softly
On the fair west wind.

CHARTRES CATHEDRAL

GREY days and greyer skies,
Grey stone lit by blue
Shadows that illumine
Long, echoing haunts
Of music and voices
From the centuries of the past.
Threads of light,
Turning gloom to poetry,
Threads of sound
Turning silence to reverberating beauty;
The Lenten music of the *grand' messe*
Fought with the light, fusing
It to a great glow.

THE SHADOWLESS PAST

FLORENCE, fairy dream
City, so much beloved;
Spoiled by idle words
From afar,
But at her heart
Her own unsullied self.
Our eyes aloof to shining
Roofs,
And those dreams in stone
Of ages mellowed into
An harmonic colour screen;
O Time, and the clatter of your
March!
Florence from her heights
Blends the glaring
Present
Into a clever
Tapestry of forgotten pain.

LOVE AND SHATTERED LIONS

A MELODY of forgotten
Colour hums in my head.
Vicenza is gray and cold,
And her lions borrowed,
But still in their own,
Lift their heads at stone left
Untrimmed
By the master hand.
A march of rich pictures
Circle in my thoughts,
Figures, like pantomime,
Flit, but do not satisfy;
The longing is ever there
For one clear vision,
One face newly drawn
Into the richly blended fresco;
The lions are looking
At the dimmed glory of
Their city, and I am looking
At a mellowing past.

DEATH AT VARENNA

Como pondering under her moon,
And I weighted with my pain;
The mountains sweep to glorious heights
And the waves lap in broken golden shreds;
How can the world be all shattered chords,
With nature
Climbing to these hills of harmony?

RIGID PILLARS

A SOUL is riding
Over gray seas and through
The countless weight of time;
Through, to a golden glimpse.
It has been thrown like
A cloud at sunrise,
From the rosy tops
Of delight
Into the deep brook of
Pain;
It has floated like a leaf
Through dusky caverns
Of the water's hidden course,
It has risen again
As a bird from the earth—
Risen,
To those heights of silver calm
That hide between the rigid
Pillars of unbending passion.

LIGHT AND FOG: LONDON

THE yellow mist is changed
Into a red haze,
Cloak-shape, under the lamp.
Galahad might wear it,
Coming to us
In a revelation of light.

There is revelation in that further lamp,
It holds a golden jewel
That lights the yellowing, drifting fog.
They are sentinels of surety,
Those lamps of iron and mystery,
And I follow their path,
A line of lighted ecstasy.

A tall black hulk looms across
The street; I hear a step behind.
Another tramping comes at the side.
A hole in this blackness
Might be anything—a place of fear,

LIGHT AND FOG : LONDON

But that those posts of magic light,
Blessed lamps of ceaseless mystery
Are there, are there
To light the trampers
And the holes that might be fear.

GROPING

It is mad, my soul :
I look down to it one moment,
It is clear and unrippled.
I look again and it has
All the cuts of centuries
Of pain.
I read from the Chinese
And am lost in happiness;
Hindu chanting outside my window
By cockneys, I think,
In a dingy London street—
And again happiness
Rises above the pain.
A face wavers on my thoughts,
Longing and love are there,
I fly to its comfort
But a dark curtain slips across
Before I reach it.
I turn with a sob,
And the chanting dies
Away into footsteps.

OUT OF MY WINDOW

A FLOCK of buzzing airplanes
Tossing in the blue-silver
Sky,
Like notes of a piano
Tossing upon orchestral depths;
The far reach of the seas,
The stretch of endless sunlit
Space,
And I, against these immensities,
Grasping with my puny soul
One fragment of light. . . .

AN ATOM OF CELESTIAL BEAUTY

I STAND in a still, damp churchyard;
The alien dust of cities lies over me;
Alien chatter
Echoes from my lips around the sagging stones.
A squirrel drops a twig upon the path.
An interval, and I am left alone
With the church and the blue-purple
Kent hills.
First it is the trees that whisper to me,
“ Still peace and rest, my dear.”
Then a gargoyle with a crooked face,
That laughs all through the long life
Of stone up into the sky,
Sends me a murmur :
“ Grow quiet, as I.” The yew is lightly
Touched by a breeze. It beckons me :
“ Lay your soul at my feet, and I will
Teach it vision that leads above all
Turmoil.”
The still quiet is padded about me;

AN ATOM OF CELESTIAL BEAUTY

My soul rests, not in a moss-grown
Tangle at the foot of the yew;
But with a clear ring of laughter
It ascends above the gray tower
And friendly, world-wise trees
To capture an atom of celestial beauty.

POEMS OF

1927

CLUSTERS OF THOUGHT

I AM lost in a swirl,
A swirl of flaming cluster of thought;
Ideas, like purple bunches of grapes
Against the green of the leaves,
Against the swift hiss of the
Far curling clouds of Flanders rain,
Wrap themselves in a tangle, like
Neglected battle-field grasses.
There is ruin, there is desolation,
I have seen, I have felt them, all
In the sweeping Flanders rain.
My thoughts are knocking against
O barrier of naked pain.
The soul of France under her rain,
Bruised, left in a smother of weeds;
Who would stoop to clear a path
Through those matted grasses?
My thoughts are like the grape clusters
Of France, swept with rain
And naked to the will of idle hands.

REACTION FROM THE RENAISSANCE

WE are told by the poets
Of those ages that grasped
At sentiments of
Gush and fancy,
That we must grapple
With love before youth
Has left us in the lurch—
Before we dislike to
Chant songs at the moon,
In moments when her
Silence might give us
A breath of tumultuous beauty.

Love may pass me
As a flight of wild ducks
In the gloom,
The roses of youth may
Pass me,
If I may for one hour
Gather the silence of space
Into the fabric of my soul.

ON A CHALK CLIFF

I AM blown by the wind
As a slender flower on the downs;
It whirls me around on
A hill that runs into the purple sky.
Sweeps of sand-coloured grass
Going into the blue-purple;
The wind from straight across the seas,
From the snow-cloaked hills,
Rolls the cloud into a violet-edged
Mountain of curious shape.

I am beaten by rain, with
The weight of the sea, on one side,
Hammering,
And the weight of the cold chalk
Cliff on the other.
I imagine its death-cold breath,
But I smell only the salt of
The marsh-grass.
The sea beats,

ON A CHALK CLIFF

And my mind pounds out
Driftweeds of thought.

Marionettes, clinking on a wooden bench,
Dancers, dressed as nudes
Against a storm-purple curtain,
The music swelling itself
Into a tremble of intensity
Till it bursts into a thousand
Sparkling fragments. . . .

Thoughts and visions,
And the rumble of the eternal seas.

FAILURE

IN his mind
The rages of the world
Are massed,
Mazes of philosophical theories,
The heart-rending patience
Of the poor.
He feels the blinding heat,
The suffering of all the
Ancient world and workers
Burnt upon the altar
To materialistic splendour.
His brain is whirling
With the misery, the beauty,
The tense preoccupation
Of the creative mood;
His slender frame is
Shaking, too weak to
Curb
Into coherency these
Impressions, gathered from
Hot thoughts of all the ages.

SPACE

SLENDER chimney-pots
Gray in the rain,
Fifes and drums
Drowning
The beat of the rain—
Happy, happy;
The sound spreads out
Across translucent
Spaces. . . .

My thoughts are far across
The unbroken seas,
To where the soft rain
Is spreading a lavender mist
Over the new green
Of those hills
That are the houses of my heart.

THE FIELD OF THE FORTY FOOTSTEPS

IN the azure blue and flame-streaked
Sky,
Wind-swept across the whitened
Seas, toss in unfathomed passions
Three souls who had broken as they
Stooped over a field of black hate.
Where London, dim and glowing,
Throbbing with a thousand lives,
Now weighs her shadowed
Mass upon time-sustaining earth,
There had been an empty field,
Empty but for those three souls
Whose striving voices
Echo hollow about my ears
And bid me tell a tale;
A tale that haunts the sky-lines
Of my mind
As some black and ghostly cloud.

Two brothers, so young as never
To have found

THE FIELD OF THE FORTY FOOTSTEPS .

That under all life there lies
Failure,
And under all failure there
Lies a world
Where the spirit rises,
Content with crimsons on purples,
And free from the crush of desire—
These two brothers then, strongly heated
With unthinking passion,
Met in this field with sword and blood
One black night.
They loved one girl, and
Most terribly beautiful was she,
As lovely as ripe grasses running
Before the wind;
Beautiful as the eternal snows
Rushing up in a
Pale blue sky.
Before her they met,
For they had dragged her to the field;
And bitter was the clash of steel
Through the mist of her sobs.
Flesh being weaker than even
The most thoughtless soul.

THE FIELD OF THE FORTY FOOTSTEPS

The two brothers fell,
One, and then the other.
And she, rising from her seat
Of dew-chilled sod,
Stood motionless above them,
Until she dropped too,
And lay cold and white, coloured,
Perhaps, with the blood of
Her loved one.

Years after, when the turmoil
That was London's growth
Began to go treading past this field,
There could still be seen the bare print
Of the forty footsteps,
Clear as anguish;
The earth-drawn tread of men who had moved
In deathly struggle. Neither
Had the grass grown
On the tussock where she had sat;
But it lay bare and dusty
At the whim of the swirling winds.

MORNING MOODS

MORNING, the world over,
A melody, a mixture, a clash
Of the composite earth.
Faint, clear sunlight mellowing
Trees and hills, the
Thinnest flakings of mist
Along the valleys.
Soul and mind, waking
Empty
And a-quiver for the first
Sensibilities of the day,
Leap to its beauty;
Only to drop
Fathoms deep
At the jar of a dog's bark.

London, rousing herself to
A June day, a
Soft giant turning very
Gently;

MORNING MOODS

The mutter of the river, the
Humming of the distant cloud
Of traffic,
Like a flock of dream bees :
Then,
A shout, an angry splutter;
A boy is throwing stones
At a swan.

Paris, sharp and clear as
A mountain brook;
Her colours dashing,
Brilliant,
Like those of a Cretan vase,
Yet all veiled with a sheen
Of translucent beauty.
I dream in my window,
Watching the bright sunlight
Sliding down the obelisk in
The Place de la Concorde;
The slam of the opening shutters
Of the shops that sell
Weighty nothings,
In the Rue de Rivoli,

MORNING MOODS

Break my thoughts
As the clatter of a falling tray
Will break for a moment
A hum of conversation.

Morning, morning!
Mistress of one's moods,
Chariot of one's dreams—
May I gain
The quietude of your radiance.

AUTUMN MOONLIGHT

I AM riding, a black figure,
A black horse,
Through woods that reflect
From their darkness
The silver-misty light of
An autumn moon.
I am throwing myself into
Silence;
A silence that is a living
Form of some grotesque imaginings.
It is like plunging
Through a gauze curtain:
A curtain without substance
That falls back into
A more and more vitalic silence.
I am riding, riding,
On into a formless space;
The hanging scent of
Chilled bracken
Cuts into the misty dream
That is the night.

RAMSES BEFORE THE WALLS OF KADESH

A KING who stood above the multitude
Of vacillating ones,
Whose right arm was like a jade
Shaft flung into the sunlight,
Whose voice, raised above the
Tumult of disintegration,
Stemmed the fateful tide of centuries
For one valiant moment;
Such stands forth Ramses the Second,
Pharaoh of mighty hordes.

Great is the mellow tarnish of age,
Splendid the dying flames of
That ancient civilization.
The Pharaoh, slender and charming,
Was the small pebble in the wall
That held culture apart
From the invasions of raw, hot blood
Who sought to shift a little
The patterns in changeless time.

RAMSES BEFORE THE WALLS OF KADESH

Gathering forces where he might,
Mercenaries from Nubia, from Sardinia,
Arming well the tillers of his own soil,
He named their groups after the four
Great guardians of his royal power,
Amon, Ra, Ptah, and Sutekh,
And sought to meet the Hittite power
Far across the desert from
His laggard Nile.

Twenty-nine days away from Tharu,
That last link with home,
He drew his chariotry and infantry
Into a camp that saw,
Below, the Orontes winding a silver thread
Across the plains of Kadesh,
City of battlements, and seat of a
Transgressing power.

Ramses, fiery and passionate,
Seeking to conquer in one great stride
What Solomon himself
Could not have welded together in

RAMSES BEFORE THE WALLS OF KADESH

Many decades of years,
Marched so quickly upon Kadesh
That the armies of Ra, Ptah, and Sutekh
Sagged far behind, and only the men of Amon
Kept pace with the Pharaoh in his chariot drawn.
They crossed the river below the city,
At the time-honoured ford of Shabtuna,
Called by the Hebrews Ribleh,
And, it being all clear before them, with
Never a sign of the Hittite or his crafty King,
Swept quickly down by the river under
The noonday sun, to rest at last
Within a spear's throw of the
City's brooding walls.

The foreigner's clever, conquering King,
Metalla,
Meantime watched from around the ramparts
The splendid carelessness of Ramses.
The Hittite army,
Gathered from the time-famed enemies of Egypt,
The kings of Naharin, Kadesh, and Aleppo—
Their cunning fanned by hate
And envy of the Pharaoh's gold-filled palaces—

RAMSES BEFORE THE WALLS OF KADESH

Seconded Metalla in his game of camouflage.
Metalla drew them to
Battle array;
Shuffled his army across the river,
Hid it behind the ramparts of the city
To the northwest,
To stand until the Egyptian might be
Fully encamped and at rest.

So cleverly had the Hittite forseen
And gathered to his cause the chance
Blessings that Teshub, his God, had given,
That never a glint of his array
Did a scout of the Pharaoh's view.
The desert held a throbbing unit of
Danger and destruction in her barren breast
And Ramses sat at ease in his tent;
While around him the provision trains,
Their slow oxen blinking and dodging the lash,
Came to rest by the barricade
Of shields,
And into this square of men made nerveless
By long-drawn effort,

RAMSES BEFORE THE WALLS OF KADESH

Were dragged two spies of Metalla,
Who, to escape the furies of bastinado,
Revealed the lurking-place of the Hittite army.

Stretched along the road of the eager Pharaoh,
The divisions of Ra, Ptah, and Sutekh
Marched without thought of each other
Or of battle;
While

Metalla, sweeping with his chariots to the south,
Crossed the shallow Orontes
And cut through the infantry of Ra
As the winds of the Sahara,
Turning its wings to a running mob,
Its centre to a mass of blood.

Ramses, gathering the courage
Of his men, with both hands lifted in short
Incantation to Amon-Ra, giver of power,
Drew the fugitives of the broken army
Of Ra into his ranks,
And slew the forerunners of the victor's
Swarming charioteers.
But mass upon mass flung mass before it;

RAMSES BEFORE THE WALLS OF KADESH

And the remnants of Ra carried the men
Of Amon with them to the north.
The Pharaoh and his household troops
Stood rigid in the welter,
Disorder behind him, the body of
The Asiatics heaped before him,
And the armies of Ptah and Sutekh
Far across the desert, unknowing,
With only the slender thread of a human life
To carry the message of disaster.

With no halt, back against the wall,
That the foe might gather his strength,
Ramses leaped to his chariot,
And far ahead of his own body of warriors,
Struck the Hittite in the face;
To retreat, to strike, to turn riverwards,
And there, where their line was forming,
To hurl them, and with them
The brother of Metalla, King of Aleppo,
Without pause into the river.
Time after time he charged,
His right arm hurling the foe down

RAMSES BEFORE THE WALLS OF KADESH

To be trampled by the fury of his passing.
Fate, that impish weapon of some Power
Beyond our sight,
Tempted the men of Asia first to tarry
By the Egyptian's empty camp,
And then, forgetting victory,
Turn from the field of blood,
From the capture of the valiant king,
Who was hemmed by the river and his enemies
Into a square of death—
Turn to feed upon the Nile-grown riches
That lay scattered on the sands
Of that foreign land.

Into this soft pause of the
Asiatics,
Who stooped unheeding before the lust of gain,
A body of the Pharaoh's loyal subjects
Coming from the rear,
Recruits sent across Asia from the sea
To join his march of triumphant power,
Struck the gloating ones full,
And felled them to a man.

RAMSES BEFORE THE WALLS OF KADESH

The Pharaoh gained, the
Hittite lost. He sent a thousand
More
To hammer down the thin Egyptian line.
The sun moved steadily west, the
Dust covered all but sound:
The bitter clash of chariot upon chariot,
Screams of the defeated horse.
Six times, Ramses, gathering his
Men as frightened sheep run to the goat,
Charged into the enemies' thickly
Clustered forces.
Six times charging, the hours
Passed till they numbered three;
Through the long orange
Rays of the sun
The standards of Ptah
Glimmered in their dust, as
They rushed from Shabtuna
To avenge their disastrous loafing
Upon the Hittite's weary men.
These, trampled from both sides
By Egypt's furious captains,
Turned their horses towards the

RAMSES BEFORE THE WALLS OF KADESH

Silent walls of Kadesh,
And
Were gone in broken, tumbled mobs.
The quiet gray-white of the
Desert evening
Came to look down upon a line
Of shining picket fires,
While Ramses, among his nobles,
Counted the captives and the spoils
That his own right arm
Had beaten in glory
From the hands of his foe.

Printed in Great Britain by
W. Graves, Drummond Street, London, N.W.



AN OPINION.

JOSEPH AUSLANDER has written of this book in reviewing the American Edition :

THE poems of LORNA GREENE glow with the morning. They are alive like hair and flowers. They rejoice in the mere living, in the sensation of awareness. They thrill with pictures as crisp as a water-colour or a Japanese print. They have the bubbling brevity of piccolo notes. What is most extraordinary, perhaps, they do not run riot as they well might. There is a restraint astonishing in one so young, an ardent economy, cool and jewelled.

And through all these etched intensities and carnivals of colour there runs always, like the scarlet thread in a Tyrian shawl, the sombre music of the soul.